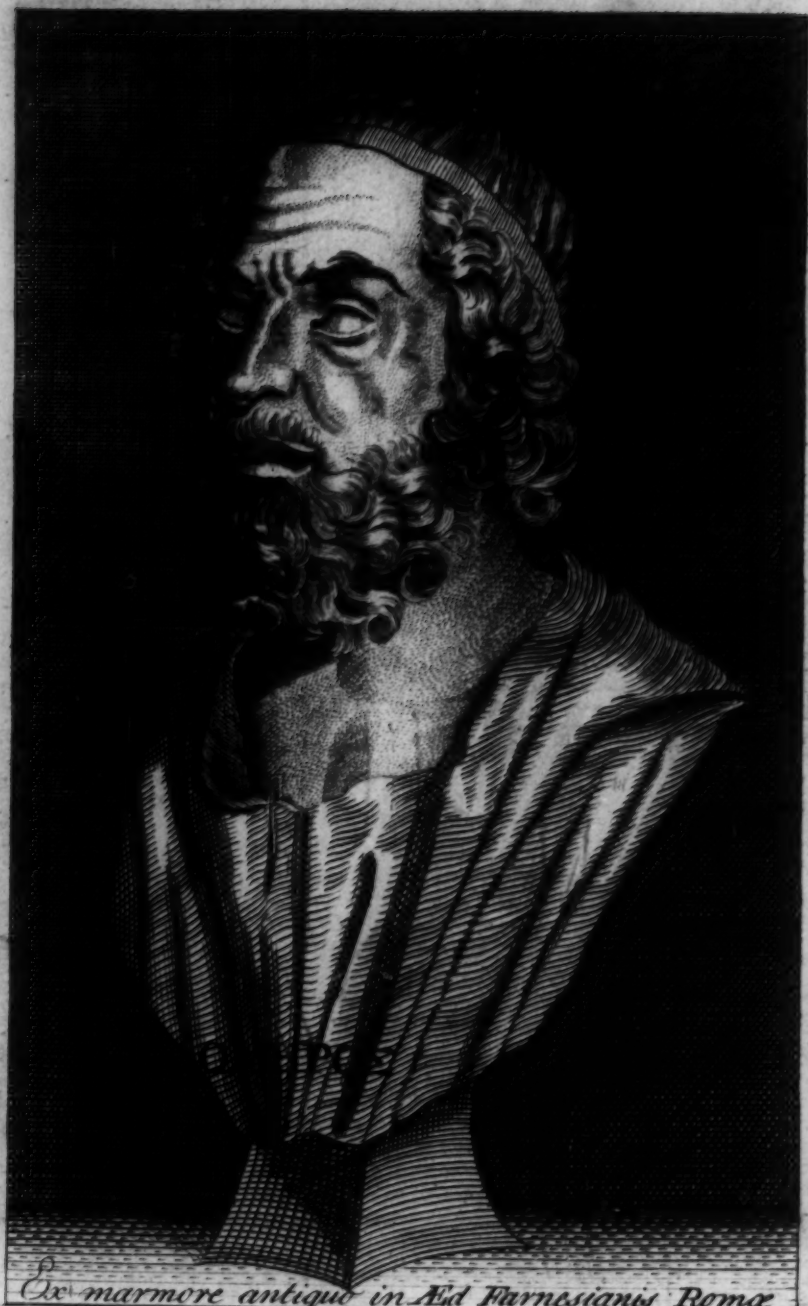
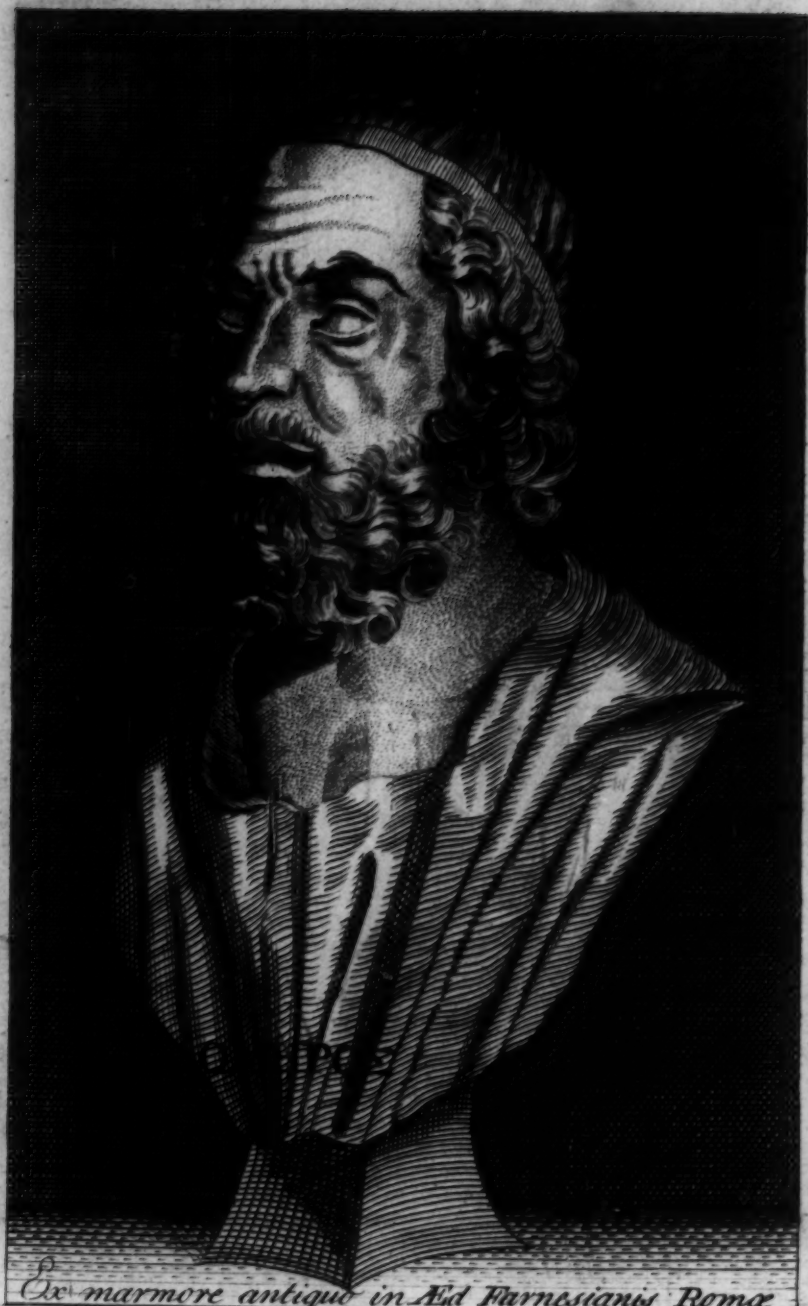




Ex marmore antiquo in Aed Parnesianis Romæ

J. Winckelmann sculp.



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ODYSSEY
OF
HOMER.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GREEK,

BY

ALEXANDER POPE, Esq.

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A GENERAL VIEW
OF THE
E P I C P O E M,
AND OF THE
I L I A D AND O D Y S S E Y.

EXTRACTED FROM *BOSSU*.

S E C T I O N I.

THE fables of poets were originally employed in representing the Divine Nature*, according to the notion then conceived of it. This sublime subject occasioned the first poets to be called divines, and poetry the language of the gods. They divided the divine attributes into so many persons; because the infirmity of a human mind cannot sufficiently conceive, or explain, so much power and action in a simplicity so great and indivisible as that of God. And perhaps they were also jealous of the advantages they reaped from such excellent and exalted learning, and of which they thought the vulgar part of mankind was not worthy.

THEY could not describe the operations of this almighty cause, without speaking at the same time of its effects: so that to divinity they added physiology, and treated of both, without quitting the umbrages of their allegorical expressions.

BUT man being the chief and the most noble of all that God produced, and nothing being so proper, or

* Of the nature of epic poetry.

more useful to poets than this subject; they added it to the former, and treated of the doctrine of morality after the same manner as they did that of divinity and philosophy: and from morality, thus treated, is formed that kind of poem and fable which we call epic.

THE poets did the same in morality, that the divines had done in divinity. But that infinite variety of the actions and operations of the divine nature, to which our understanding bears so small a proportion, did, as it were, force them upon dividing the single idea of the only one God into several persons, under the different names of Jupiter, Juno, Neptune, and the rest.

AND on the other hand, the nature of moral philosophy being such, as never to treat of things in particular, but in general; the epic poets were obliged to unite in one single idea, in one and the same person, and in an action which appeared singular, all that looked like it in different persons, and in various actions; which might be thus contained as so many species under their genus.

THE presence of the deity, and the care such an august cause is to be supposed to take about any action, obliges the poet to represent this action as great, important, and managed by || kings and princes. It obliges him likewise to think and speak in an elevated way above the vulgar, and in a style that may in some sort keep up the character of the divine persons he introduces. † To this end serve the poetical and figurative expression, and the majesty of the heroic verse.

BUT all this, being divine and surprizing, may quite ruin all probability: therefore the poet should take a peculiar care as to that point, since his chief aim is to instruct, and without probability any action is less likely to persuade.

|| *Res gestae regumque ducumque.* Hor. Art. Poet.

† ——— *Cui mens divinior atque
Magna sonaturum, des non sibi ille honorem,* Horat.



AND OF THE ILIAD AND ODYSSEY. v

LASTLY, since precepts ought to be † concise, to be the more easily conceived, and less oppress the memory; and since nothing can be more effectual to this end than proposing one single idea, and collecting all things so well together, as to be present to our minds all at once; therefore the poets have reduced all to one ‡ single action, under one and the same design, and in a body whose members and parts should be homogeneous.

WHAT we have observed of the nature of the epic poem, gives us a just idea of it, and we may define it thus:

“THE epic poem is a discourse invented by art, to form the manners, by such instructions as are disguised under the allegories of some one important action, which is related in verse, after a probable, diverting, and surprizing manner.”

SECTION II.

§ IN every design which a man deliberately undertakes, the end he proposes is the first thing in his mind, and that by which he governs the whole work, and all its parts: thus since the end of the epic poem is to regulate the manners, it is with this first view the poet ought to begin.

BUT there is a great difference between the philosophical and the poetical doctrine of manners. The schoolmen content themselves with treating of virtues and vices in general: the instructions they give are proper for all states, people, and for all ages. But the poet has a nearer regard to his own country, and the necessities of his own nation. With this design he makes choice of some piece of morality, the most proper and just he can imagine: and in order to press this home, he makes

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† *Quicquid præcipies esto brevis, ut cito dicta
Percipiant animi dociles, teneantque fideles.* Hor. Poet.

‡ *Denique sit quodvis simplex duntaxat, et unum.* Ibid.

§ The fable of the Iliad.

less use of the force of reasoning, than of the power of insinuation; accommodating himself to the particular customs and inclinations of those, who are to be the subject, or the readers, of his work.

LET us now see how Homer has acquitted himself in these respects.

HE saw the Grecians, for whom he designed his poem, were divided into as many states as they had capital cities. Each was a body politic apart, and had its form of government independent from all the rest. And yet these distinct states were very often obliged to unite together in one body against their common enemies. These were two very different sorts of government, such as could not be comprehended in one maxim of morality, and in one single poem.

THE poet therefore has made two distinct fables of them. The one is for Greece in general, united into one body, but composed of parts independent on each other; and the other for each particular state, considered as they were in time of peace, without the former circumstances and the necessity of being united.

As for the first sort of government, in the union or rather in the confederacy of many independent states; experience has always made it appear, "That nothing so much causes success as a due subordination, and a right understanding among the chief commanders. And on the other hand, the inevitable ruin of such confederacies proceeds from the heats, jealousies and ambition of the different leaders, and the discontents of submitting to a single general." All sorts of states, and in particular the Grecians, had dearly experienced this truth. So that the most useful and necessary instruction that could be given them, was to lay before their eyes the loss which both the people and the princes must of necessity suffer by the ambition, discord, and obstinacy of the latter.

HOMER then has taken for the foundation of his fable this great truth; that a misunderstanding between prin-

ees is the ruin of their own states. "I sing, says he,
"the anger of Achilles, so pernicious to the Grecians,
"and the cause of so many heroes deaths, occasioned
"by the discord and separation of Agamemnon and that
"prince."

BUT that this truth may be completely and fully
known, there is need of a second to support it. It is ne-
cessary in such a design, not only to represent the con-
federate states at first disagreeing among themselves, and
from thence unfortunate; but to show the same states
afterwards reconciled and united, and of consequence
victorious.

LET us now see how he has joined all these in one
general action.

"Several princes independent on one another were
"united against a common enemy. The person, whom
"they had elected their general, offers an affront to the
"most valiant of all the confederates. This offended
"prince is so far provoked, as to relinquish the union,
"and obstinately refused to fight for the common cause.
"This misunderstanding gives the enemy such an ad-
"vantage, that the allies are very near quitting their de-
"sign with dishonour. He himself, who made the sepa-
"ration, is not exempt from sharing the misfortune
"which he brought upon his party. For having permit-
"ted his intimate friend to succour them in a great ne-
"cessity, this friend is killed by the enemy's general.
"Thus the contending princes, being both made wiser
"at their own cost, are reconciled, and unite again:
"then this valiant prince not only obtains the victory
"in the public cause, but revenges his private wrongs
"by killing with his own hands the author of the death
"of his friend."

THIS is the first platform of the poem, and the fisti-
on, which reduces into one important and universal acti-
on all the particulars upon which it turns.

IN the next place, it must be rendered probable by
the circumstances of times, places and persons; some

persons must be found out, already known by history or otherwise, whom we may with probability make the actors and personages of this fable. Homer has made choice of the siege of Troy, and feigned that this action happened there. To a phantom of his brain, whom he would paint valiant and choleric, he has given the name of Achilles; that of Agamemnon to his general; that of Hector to the enemy's commander, and so to the rest.

BESIDES, he was obliged to accommodate himself to the manners, customs, and genius of the Greeks his auditors, the better to make them attend to the instruction of his poem; and to gain their approbation by praising them: so that they might the better forgive him the representation of their own faults in some of his chief personages. He admirably discharges all these duties, by making these brave princes and those victorious people all Grecians, and the fathers of those he had a mind to commend.

BUT not being content, in a work of such a length, to propose only the principal point of the moral, and to fill up the rest with useless ornaments and foreign incidents, he extends this moral by all its necessary consequences. As for instance in the subject before us, it is not enough to know, that a good understanding ought always to be maintained among confederates: it is likewise of equal importance, that if there happens any division, care must be taken to keep it secret from the enemy, that their ignorance of this advantage may prevent their making use of it. And in the second place, when their concord is but counterfeit and only in appearance, one should never press the enemy too closely; for this would discover the weakness which we ought to conceal from them.

THE episode of Patroclus most admirably furnishes us with these two instructions. For when he appeared in the arms of Achilles, the Trojans, who took him for that prince now reconciled and united to the confederates, immediately gave ground, and quitted the advan-

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tages they had before over the Greeks. But Patroclus, who should have been contented with this success, presses upon Hector too boldly, and by obliging him to fight, soon discovers that it was not the true Achilles who was clad in his armour, but a hero of much inferior prowess. So that Hector kills him, and regains those advantages which the Trojans had lost, on the opinion that Achilles was reconciled.

SECTION III.

† THE *Odyssey* was not designed, like the *Iliad*, for the instruction of all the states of Greece joined in one body, but for each state in particular. As a state is composed of two parts; the head which commands, and the members which obey; there are instructions requisite to both, to teach the one to govern, and the others to submit to government.

THERE are two virtues necessary to one in authority, prudence to order, and care to see his orders put in execution. The prudence of a politician is not acquired but by a long experience in all sorts of business, and by an acquaintance with all the different forms of governments and states. The care of the administration suffers not him that has the government to rely upon others, but requires his own presence: and kings, who are absent from their states, are in danger of losing them, and give occasion to great disorders and confusion.

THESE two points may be easily united in one and the same man. "A king forsakes his kingdom to visit
" the courts of several princes, where he learns the
" manners and customs of different nations. From
" hence there naturally arises a vast number of incidents,
" of dangers, and of adventures, very useful for a political institution. On the other side, this absence gives
" way to the disorders which happen in his own kingdom, and which end not till his return, whose pre-

† The fable of the *Odyssey*.

“sence only can re-establish all things.” Thus the absence of a king has the same effects in this fable, as the division of the princes had in the former.

THE subjects have scarce any need but of one general maxim, which is, to suffer themselves to be governed, and to obey faithfully; whatever reason they may imagine against the orders they received. It is easy to join this instruction with the other, by bestowing on this wise and industrious prince such subjects, as in his absence would rather follow their own judgment than his commands; and by demonstrating the misfortunes which this disobedience draws upon them, the evil consequences which almost infallibly attend these particular notions, which are intirely different from the general idea of him who ought to govern.

BUT as it was necessary that the princes in the Iliad should be cholerick and quarrelsome, so it is necessary in the fable of the Odysssey that the chief person should be sage and prudent. This raises a difficulty in the fiction; because this person ought to be absent for the two reasons afore-mentioned, which are essential to the fable, and which constitute the principal aim of it: but he cannot absent himself, without offending against another maxim of equal importance, *viz.* that a king should upon no account leave his country.

IT is true, there are sometimes such necessities as sufficiently excuse the prudence of a politician in this point. But such a necessity is a thing important enough of itself to supply matter for another poem, and this multiplication of the action would be vicious. To prevent which in the first place, this necessity and the departure of the hero must be disjoined from the poem; and in the second place, the hero having been obliged to absent himself, for a reason antecedent to the action and placed distinct from the fable, he ought not so far to embrace this opportunity of instructing himself, as to absent himself voluntarily from his own government. For at this rate, his absence would be merely voluntary,

and one might with reason lay to his charge all the disorders which might arise.

THUS in the constitution of the fable, he ought not to take for his action, and for the foundation of his poem, the departure of a prince from his own country, nor his voluntary stay in any other place; but his return, and this return retarded against his will. This is the first idea Homer gives us of it. † His hero appears at first in a desolate island, sitting upon the side of the sea, which with tears in his eyes he looks upon as the obstacle that had so long opposed his return, and detained him from revisiting his own dear country.

AND lastly, since this forced delay might more naturally and usually happen to such as make voyages by sea; Homer has judiciously made choice of a prince whose kingdom was in an island.

LET us see then how he has feigned all this action, making his hero a person in years, because years are requisite to instruct a man in prudence and policy.

“ A PRINCE had been obliged to forsake his native
 “ country, and to head an army of his subjects in a foreign expedition. Having gloriously performed this
 “ enterprize, he was marching home again, and conducting his subjects to his own state. But spite of all the
 “ attempts, with which his eagerness to return had inspired him, he was stopped by the way by tempests
 “ for several years, and cast upon several countries differing from each other in manners and government.
 “ In these dangers his companions, not always following his orders, perished through their own fault. The
 “ grandees of his country strangely abuse his absence, and raise no small disorders at home. They consume
 “ his estate, conspire to destroy his son, would constrain his queen to accept of one of them for her husband; and indulge themselves in all violence, so much
 “ the more, because they were persuaded he would never return. But at last he returns, and discovering himself

† *Odyssey* 5.

“ only to his son and some others, who had continued
 “ firm to him, he is an eye-witness of the insolence of
 “ his enemies, punishes them according to their deserts,
 “ and restores to his island that tranquillity and repose
 “ to which they had been strangers during his absence.”

As the truth which serves for foundation to this fiction is, that the absence of a person from his own home, or his neglect of his own affairs, is the cause of great disorders: so the principal point of the action, and the most essential one, is the absence of the hero. This fills almost all the poem: for not only this real absence lasted several years, but even when the hero returned, he does not discover himself; and this prudent disguise, from whence he reaped so much advantage, has the same effect upon the authors of the disorders, and all others who knew him not, as his real absence had before, so that he is absent as to them, till the very moment of their punishment.

AFTER the poet had thus composed his fable, and joined the fiction to the truth, he then makes choice of Ulysses the king of the isle of Ithaca, to maintain the character of his chief personage, and bestowed the rest upon Telemachus, Penelope, Antinous, and others, whom he calls by what names he pleases.

I SHALL not here insist upon the many excellent advices, which are so many parts, and natural consequences of the fundamental truth; and which the poet very dexterously lays down in those fictions, which are the episodes and members of the entire action. Such for instance are these advices: not to intrude one's self into the mysteries of government, which the prince keeps secret: this is represented to us by the winds shut up in a bull-hide, which the miserable companions of Ulysses would needs be so foolish as to pry into. Not to suffer one's self to be led away by the seeming charms of an idle and inactive life, to which the Sirens Song invited*. Not to suffer one's self to be sensualized by pleasures,

* *Improba Siren desidia.* Horat.

fures, like those who were changed into brutes by Circe: and a great many other points of morality necessary for all sorts of people.

THIS poem is more useful to the people than the Iliad, where the subjects suffer rather by the ill conduct of their princes, than through their own miscarriages. But in the Odyssey, it is not the fault of Ulysses that is the ruin of his subjects. This wise prince leaves untried no method to make them partakers of the benefit of his return. Thus the poet in the Iliad says, "He sings the anger of Achilles, which had caused the death of so many Grecians;" and on the contrary, in the † Odyssey he tells his readers, "That the subjects perished through their own fault."

SECTION IV.

§ ARISTOTLE bestows great encomiums upon Homer for the simplicity of his design, because he has included in one single part all that happened at the siege of Troy. And to this he opposes the ignorance of some poets who imagined that the unity of the fable or action was sufficiently preserved by the unity of the hero; and who composed their Theseids, Heracleids, and the like, wherein they only heaped up in one poem every thing that happened to one personage.

HE finds fault with those poets who were for reducing the unity of the fable into the unity of the hero, because one man may have performed several adventures, which it is impossible to reduce under any one and simple head. This reducing of all things to unity and simplicity is what Horace likewise makes his first rule.

Denique sit quodvis simplex dentaxat, et unum.

ACCORDING to these rules, it will be allowable to make use of several fables; or to speak more correctly,

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† Αὐτῶν γὰρ σπερτήρεσσιν ἀτασθαλίῃσιν ἔλοντο, Odyss. i.

§ Of the unity of the fable.

of several incidents which may be divided into several fables; provided they are so ordered, that the unity of the fable be not spoiled. This liberty is still greater in the epic poem, because it is of a larger extent, and ought to be entire and complete.

I WILL explain myself more distinctly by the practice of Homer.

No doubt but one might make four distinct fables out of these four following instructions.

1. *Division between those of the same party exposes them entirely to their enemies.*

2. *Conceal your weakness, and you will be dreaded as much, as if you had none of these imperfections, of which they are ignorant.*

3. *When your strength is only feigned, and founded only in the opinion of others; never venture so far as if your strength was real.*

4. *The more you agree together, the less hurt can your enemies do you.*

IT is plain, I say, that each of these particular maxims might serve for the ground-work of a fiction, and one might make four distinct fables out of them. May one not then put all these into one single Epopea? not unless one single fable can be made out of all. The poet indeed may have so much skill as to unite all into one body, as members and parts, each of which taken asunder would be imperfect; and if he joins them so, as that this conjunction shall be no hinderance at all to the unity and the regular simplicity of the fable. This is what Homer has done with such success in the composition of the Iliad.

1. *The division between Achilles and his allies tended to the ruin of their designs.* 2. *Patroclus comes to their relief in the armour of this hero, and Hector retreats.* 3. *But this young man pushing the advantage, which his disguise gave him, too far, ventures to engage with Hector himself; but not being master of Achilles's strength, whom he only*

represented in outward appearance, he is killed, and by this means leaves the Grecian affairs in the same disorder, from which in that disguise he came to free them. 4. Achilles, provoked at the death of his friend, is reconciled, and revenges his loss by the death of Hector. These various incidents being thus united, do not make different actions and fables, but are only the uncomplete and unfinished parts of one and the same action and fable, which alone can be said to be complete and entire: and all these maxims of the moral, are easily reduced into these two parts, which in my opinion cannot be separated without enervating the force of both. The two parts are these, † that a right understanding is the preservation; and discord the destruction of states.

THOUGH then the poet has made use of two parts in his poems, each of which might have served for a fable, as we have observed; yet this multiplication cannot be called a vicious and irregular Polymythia, contrary to the necessary unity and simplicity of the fable; but it gives the fable another qualification, altogether necessary and regular, namely its perfection and finishing stroke.

SECTION V.

|| THE action of a poem is the subject which the poet undertakes, proposes, and builds upon. So that the moral and the instructions which are the end of the epic poem are not the matter of it. Those the poets leave in their allegorical and figurative obscurity. They only give notice at the exordium, that they sing some action. *The Revenge of Achilles, the Return of Ulysses, etc.*

SINCE then the action is the matter of a fable, it is evident that whatever incidents are essential to the fable, or constitute a part of it, are necessary also to the action, and are parts of the epic matter, none of which ought to be omitted. Such, for instance, are the con-

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† *Concordia res parvae crescunt: discordia magnæ dilabuntur.*
Sallust. de bello Jug.

|| Of the action of the epic poem.

tention of Agamemnon and Achilles, the slaughter Hector makes in the Grecian army, the re-union of the Greek princes; and lastly, the resettlement and victory which was the consequence of that re-union.

THERE are four qualifications in the epic action: the first is its unity, the second its integrity, the third its importance, the fourth its duration.

THE unity of the epic action, as well as the unity of the fable, does not consist either in the unity of the hero, or in the unity of time: three things I suppose are necessary to it. The first is, to make use of no episode but what arises from the very platform and foundation of the action, and is as it were a natural member of the body. The second is, exactly to unite these episodes and these members with one another. And the third is, never to finish any episode so as it may seem to be an entire action; but to let each episode still appear in its own particular nature, as the member of a body, and as a part of itself not complete.

* ARISTOTLE not only says that the epic action should be one, but adds, that it should be entire, perfect, and complete, and for this purpose ought to have a beginning, a middle, and an end. These three parts of a whole are too generally and universally denoted by the words, beginning, middle and end; we may interpret them more precisely, and say, that the causes and designs of an action are the beginning: that the effects of these causes, and the difficulties that are met with in the execution of these designs, are the middle; and that the unravelling and resolution of these difficulties are the end.

† HOMER's design in the Iliad is to relate the anger and revenge of Achilles. The beginning of this action is the change of Achilles from a calm to a passionate temper. The middle is the effects of his passion, and all the illustrious deaths it is the cause of. The end of this

* Of the beginning, middle, and end of the action.

† The action of the Iliad.

same action is the return of Achilles to his calmness of temper again. All was quiet in the Grecian camp, when Agamemnon their general provokes Apollo against them, whom he was willing to appease afterwards at the cost and prejudice of Achilles, who had no part in his fault. This then is an exact beginning: it supposes nothing before, and requires after it the effects of this anger. Achilles revenges himself, and that is an exact middle; it supposes before it the anger of Achilles, this revenge is the effect of it. Then this middle requires after it the effects of this revenge, which is the satisfaction of Achilles: for the revenge had not been complete, unless Achilles had been satisfied. By this means the poet makes his hero, after he was glutted by the mischief he had done to Agamemnon, by the death of Hector, and the honour he did his friend, by insulting over his murderer; he makes him, I say, to be moved by the tears and misfortunes of king Priam. We see him as calm at the end of the poem, during the funeral of Hector, as he was at the beginning of the poem, whilst the plague raged among the Grecians. This end is just, since the calmness of temper Achilles re-enjoyed, is only an effect of the revenge which ought to have preceded: and after this no body expects any more of his anger. Thus has Homer been very exact in the beginning, middle and end of the action he made choice of for the subject of his Iliad.

* His design in the Odyssey was to describe the return of Ulysses from the siege of Troy, and his arrival at Ithaca. He opens this poem with the complaints of Minerva against Neptune, who opposed the return of this hero, and against Calypso who detained him in an island from Ithaca. Is this a beginning? no; doubtless, the reader would know why Neptune is displeased with Ulysses, and how this prince came to be with Calypso: he would know how he came from Troy thither: the poet answers his demands out of the mouth of Ulysses

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* The action of the Odyssey.

himself, who relates these things, and begins the action by the recital of his travels from the city of Troy. It signifies little whether the beginning of the action be the beginning of the poem. The beginning of this action is that which happens to Ulysses, when upon his leaving Troy he bends his course for Ithaca. The middle comprehends all the misfortunes he endured, and all the disorders of his own government. The end is the re-instituting of this hero in the peaceable possession of his kingdom, where he was acknowledged by his son, his wife, his father, and several others. The poet was sensible he should have ended ill had he gone no farther than the death of these princes, who were the rivals and enemies of Ulysses, because the reader might have looked for some revenge, which the subjects of these princes might have taken, on him who had killed their sovereigns: but this danger over, and the people vanquished and quieted, there was nothing more to be expected. The poem and the action have all their parts, and no more.

BUT the order of the *Odyssy* differs from that of the *Iliad*, in that the poem does not begin with the beginning of the action.

* The causes of the action are also what the poet is obliged to give an account of. There are three sorts of causes, the humours, the interests, and the designs of men; and these different causes of an action are likewise often the causes of one another, every man taking up those interests in which his humour engages him, and forming those designs to which his humour and interest incline him. Of all these the poet ought to inform his readers, and render them conspicuous in his principal personages.

HOMER has ingeniously begun his *Odyssy* with the transactions at Ithaca, during the absence of Ulysses. If he had begun with the travels of his hero, he would scarce have spoken of any one else, and a man might have read a great deal of the poem, without conceiving

* Of the causes and beginning of the action.

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the least idea of Telemachus, Penelope, or her suitors, who had so great a share in the action; but in the beginning he has pitched upon, besides these personages, whom he discovers, he represents Ulysses in his full length, and from the very first opening one sees the interest which the gods take in the action.

THE skill and care of the same poet may be seen likewise in inducing his personages in the first book of his Iliad, where he discovers the humours, the interests, and the designs of Agamemnon, Achilles, Hector, Ulysses, and several others, and even of the deities. And in his second he makes a review of the Grecian and Trojan armies; which is full evidence, that all we have here said is very necessary.

‡ As these causes are the beginning of the action, the opposite designs against that of the hero are the middle of it, and form that difficulty or intrigue, which makes up the greatest part of the poem; the solution or unravelling commences when the reader begins to see that difficulty removed, and the doubts cleared up. Homer has divided each of his poems into two parts, and has put a particular intrigue, and the solution of it, into each part.

THE first part of the Iliad is the anger of Achilles, who is for revenging himself upon Agamemnon by the means of Hector and the Trojans. The intrigue comprehends the three days fight, which happened in the absence of Achilles: and it consists on one side in the resistance of Agamemnon and the Grecians: and on the other in the revengeful and inexorable humour of Achilles, which would not suffer him to be reconciled. The loss of the Grecians, and the despair of Agamemnon, prepare for a solution by the satisfaction which the incensed hero received from it. The death of Patroclus joined to the offers of Agamemnon, which of itself had proved ineffectual, remove this difficulty, and make the unravelling of the first part.

‡ Of the middle or intrigue of the action.

THIS death is likewise the beginning of the second part; since it puts Achilles upon the design of revenging himself on Hector. But the design of Hector is opposite to that of Achilles; this Trojan is valiant, and resolved to stand on his own defence. This valour and resolution of Hector, are on his part the cause of the intrigue. All the endeavours Achilles used to meet with Hector, and be the death of him; and the contrary endeavours of the Trojan to keep out of his reach, and defend himself, are the intrigue; which comprehends the battle of the last day. The unravelling begins at the death of Hector; and besides that, it contains the insulting of Achilles over his body, the honours he paid to Patroclus, and the intreaties of king Priam. The regrets of this king and the other Trojans, in the sorrowful obsequies they paid to Hector's body, end the unravelling; they justify the satisfaction of Achilles, and demonstrate his tranquillity.

THE first part of the *Odyssey* is the return of Ulysses into Ithaca. Neptune opposes it by raising tempests, and this makes the intrigue. The unravelling is the arrival of Ulysses upon his own island, where Neptune could offer him no farther injury. The second part is the re-instating this heroe in his own government. The princes that are his rivals, oppose him, and this is a fresh intrigue: the solution of it begins at their deaths, and is completed as soon as the Ithacans were appeased.

These two parts in the *Odyssey* have not one common intrigue. The anger of Achilles forms both the intrigues in the *Iliad*; and it is so far the matter of this *Epopæa*, that the very beginning and end of this poem depend on the beginning and end of this anger. But let the desire Achilles had to revenge himself, and the desire Ulysses had to return to his own country, be never so near allied, yet we cannot place them under one and the same notion: for that desire of Ulysses is not a passion that begins and ends in the poem with the

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action: it is a natural habit: nor does the poet propose it for his subject as he does the anger of Achilles.

We have already observed what is meant by the intrigue, and the unravelling thereof; let us now say something of the manner of forming both. These two should arise naturally out of the very essence and subject of the poem, and are to be deduced from thence. Their conduct is so exact and natural, that it seems as if their action had presented them with whatever they inserted, without putting themselves to the trouble of a farther inquiry.

What is more usual and natural to warriors, than anger, heat, passion, and impatience of bearing the least affront or disrespect? This is what forms the intrigue of the Iliad; and every thing we read there is nothing else but the effect of this humour and these passions.

What more natural and usual obstacle to those who take voyages, than the sea, the winds, and the storms? Homer makes this the intrigue of the first part of the Odyssey: and for the second, he makes use of almost the infallible effect of the long absence of a master, whose return is quite despaired of, viz. the insolence of his servants and neighbours, the danger of his son and wife, and the sequestration of his estate. Besides an absence of almost twenty years, and the insupportable fatigues joined to the age of which Ulysses than was, might induce him to believe that he should not be owned by those who thought him dead, and whose interest it was to have him really so. Therefore if he had presently declared who he was, and had called himself Ulysses, they would easily have destroyed him as an impostor, before he had an opportunity to make himself known.

There could be nothing more natural nor more necessary than this ingenious disguise, to which the advantages his enemies had taken of his absence had reduced him, and to which his long misfortunes had inured him. This allowed him an opportunity, without

hazarding any thing, of taking the best measures he could, against those persons who could not so much as mistrust any harm from him. This way was afforded him by the very nature of his action, to execute his designs, and overcome the obstacles it cast before him. And it is this contest between the prudence and the dissimulation of a single man on one hand, and the ungovernable insolence of so many rivals on the other, which constitutes the intrigue of the second part of the *Odyssy*.

* If the plot or intrigue must be natural, and such as springs from the very subject, as has been already urged; then the winding up of the plot, by a more sure claim, must have this qualification, and be a probable consequence of all that went before. As this is what the readers regard more than the rest, so should the poet be more exact in it. This is the end of the poem, and the last impression that is to be stamped upon them.

We shall find this in the *Odyssy*. Ulysses, by a tempest, is cast upon the island of the Phaeacians, to whom he discovers himself, and desires they would favour his return to his own country, which was not very far distant. One cannot see any reason why the king of this island should refuse such a reasonable request, to a hero whom he seemed to have in great esteem. The Phaeacians indeed had heard him tell the story of his adventures; and in this fabulous recital consisted all the advantage that could derive from his presence; for the art of war which they admired in him, his undauntedness under dangers, his indefatigable patience, and other virtues, were such as these islanders were not used to. All their talent lay in singing and dancing, and whatsoever was charming in a quiet life. And here we see how dextrously Homer prepares the incidents he makes use of. These people could do no less, for the account with which Ulysses had so much entertained them, than afford him a ship and a safe

* Of the end or unravelling of the action.

convoy, which was of little expence or trouble to them.

When he arrived, his long absence, and the travels which had disfigured him, made him altogether unknown; and the danger he would have incurred, had he discovered himself too soon, forced him to a disguise: lastly, this disguise gave him an opportunity of surprising those young suitors, who, for several years together, had been accustomed to nothing but to sleep well, and fare daintily.

It was from these examples that Aristotle drew this rule, "that whatever concludes the poem should so spring from the very constitution of the fable, as if it were a necessary, or at least a probable consequence.

SECTION VI.

* THE time of the epic action is not fixed, like that of the dramatic poem: it is much longer; for an uninterrupted duration is much more necessary in an action which one sees and is present at, than in one which we only read or hear repeated. Besides, tragedy is fuller of passion, and consequently of such a violence as cannot admit of so long a duration.

The Iliad containing an action of anger and violence, the poet allows it but a short time, about forty days. The design of the Odyssey required another conduct; the character of the hero is prudence and long-suffering; therefore the time of its duration is much longer, above eight years.

† The passions of tragedy are different from those of the epic poem. In the former, Terror and Pity have the chief place; the passion that seems most peculiar to epic poetry, is Admiration.

Besides this Admiration, which in general distinguishes

* The time of the action.

† The passions of the epic poem.

the epic poem from the dramatic; each epic poem has likewise some peculiar passion, which distinguishes it in particular from other epic poems, and constitutes a kind of singular and individual difference between these poems of the same species. These singular passions correspond to the character of the hero. Anger and Terror reign throughout the *Iliad*, because Achilles is angry, and the most terrible of all men. The *Æneid* has all soft and tender passions, because that is the character of *Æneas*. The prudence, wisdom, and constancy of Ulysses do not allow him either of these extremes, therefore the poet does not permit one of them to be predominant in the *Odyssey*. He confines himself to Admiration only, which he carries to an higher pitch than in the *Iliad*: and it is upon this account that he introduces a great many more machines in the *Odyssey* into the body of the action, than are to be seen in the actions of the other two poems.

* The manners of the epic poem ought to be poetically good, but it is not necessary they be always morally so. They are poetically good, when one may discover the virtue or vice, the good or ill inclinations, of every one who speaks or acts: they are poetically bad, when persons are made to speak or act out of character, or inconsistently, or unequally. The manners of *Æneas* and of *Mezentius* are equally good, considered poetically, because they equally demonstrate the piety of the one, and the impiety of the other.

† It is requisite to make the same distinction between a hero in morality and a hero in poetry, as between moral and poetical goodness. Achilles had as much right to the latter as *Æneas*. Aristotle says, that the hero of a poem should be neither good nor bad; neither advanced above the rest of mankind by his virtues, or sink beneath them by his vices; that he may be the

proper

* The manners.

† Character of the hero.

proper and fuller example to others, both what to imitate and what to decline.

The other qualifications of the manners, are, that they be suitable to the causes which either raise or discover them in the persons; that they have an exact resemblance to what history or fable have delivered of those persons to whom they are ascribed; and that there be an equality in them, so that no man is made to act or speak out of his character.

† But this equality is not sufficient for the unity of the character; it is further necessary that the same spirit appear in all sort of encounters. Thus *Æneas* acting with great piety and mildness in the first part of the *Æneid*, which requires no other character; and afterwards appearing illustrious in heroic valour in the wars of the second part, but there, without any appearance either of a hard or a soft disposition, would doubtless be far from offending against the equality of the manners: but yet there would be no simplicity or unity in the character. So that besides the qualities that claim their particular place upon different occasions, there must be one appearing throughout, which commands over all the rest; and without this we may affirm it is no character.

One may indeed make a hero as valiant as *Achilles*, as pious as *Æneas*, and as prudent as *Ulysses*. But it is a mere chimera to imagine a hero, that has the valour of *Achilles*, the piety of *Æneas*, and the prudence of *Ulysses*, at one and the same time. This vision might happen to an author, who would suit the character of a hero to whatever each part of the action might naturally require, without regarding the essence of the fable, or the unity of the character in the same person upon all sorts of occasions: this hero would be the mildest, best-natured prince in the world, and also the most cholerick, hard-hearted, and implacable crea-

† Unity of the character.

ture imaginable ; he would be extremely tender, like Æneas ; extremely violent, like Achilles ; and yet have the indifference of Ulysses, that is incapable of the two extremes. Would it not be in vain for the poet to call this person by the same name throughout ?

Let us reflect on the effects it would produce in several poems, whose authors were of opinion, that the chief character of a hero is that of an accomplished man. They would be all alike, all valiant in battle, prudent in council, pious in the acts of religion, courteous, civil, magnificent ; and lastly, endued with all the prodigious virtues any poet could invent. All this would be independent from the action and the subject of the poem ; and upon seeing each hero separated from the rest of the work, we should not easily guess, to what action and to what poem the hero belonged. So that we should see that none of those would have a character, since the character is that which makes a person discernible, and which distinguishes him from all others.

This commanding quality in Achilles is his anger, in Ulysses the art of dissimulation, in Æneas meekness. Each of these may be stiled, by way of eminence, the character of these heroes.

But these characters cannot be alone. It is absolutely necessary that some other should give them a lustre, and embellish them as far as they are capable : either by hiding the defects that are in each, by some noble and shining qualities ; as the poet has done the anger of Achilles, by shading it with extraordinary valour : or by making them entirely of the nature of a true and solid virtue, as is to be observed in the two others. The dissimulation of Ulysses is a part of his prudence ; and the meekness of Æneas is wholly employed in submitting his will to the gods. For the making up this union, our poets have joined together such qualities as are by nature the most compatible ; Valour with Anger, Meekness with Piety, and Prudence with Dissimulation. This last union was neces-

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fary for the goodness of Ulysses ; for without that, his dissimulation might have degenerated into wickedness and double-dealing.

S E C T. VII.

* WE come now to the machines of the epic poem. The chief passion which it aims to excite being Admiration, nothing is so conducive to that as the Marvellous ; and the importance and dignity of the action is by nothing so greatly elevated as by the care and interposition of heaven.

These machines are of three sorts. Some are theological, and were invented to explain the nature of God. Others are physical, and represent things of nature. The last are moral, and are the images of virtues and vices.

Homer and the antients have given to their deities the manners, passions, and vices of men. Their poems are wholly allegorical ; and in this view it is easier to defend Homer than to blame him. We cannot accuse him for making mention of many gods, for his bestowing passions upon them, or even introducing them fighting against men. The scripture uses the like figures and expressions.

If it be allowable to speak thus of the gods in theology, much more in the fictions of natural philosophy, where, if a poet describes the deities, he must give them such manners, speeches, and actions as are conformable to the nature of the things they represent under those divinities. The case is the same in moral deities : Minerva is wise because she represents prudence ; Venus is both good or bad, because the passion of love is capable of these contrary qualities.

Since among the gods of a poem some are good, some bad, and some indifferently either ; and since of our passions we make so many allegorical deities ; one may attribute to the gods all that is done in the poem,

whether good or evil. But these deities do not act constantly in one and the same manner.

Sometimes they act invisibly, and by mere inspiration; which has nothing in it extraordinary or miraculous; being no more than what we say every day, "that some god has assisted us, or some daemon has instigated us.

At other times they appear visibly, and manifest themselves to men, in a manner altogether miraculous and praeternatural.

The third way has something of both the others; it is in truth a miracle, but is not commonly so accounted: this includes dreams, oracles, etc.

All these ways must be probable; for so necessary as the marvellous is to the epic action, as nothing is so conducive to admiration; yet we can, on the other hand, admire nothing that we think impossible. Though the probability of these machines be of a very large extent, (since it is founded upon divine power) it is not without limitations. There are numerous instances of allowable and probable machines in the epic poems, where the gods are no less actors than the men. But the less credible sort, such as Metamorphoses, etc. are far more rare.

This suggests a reflection on the method of rendering those machines probable, which in their own nature are hardly so. Those, which require only divine probability, should be so disengaged from the action, that one might subtract them from it without destroying the action. But those, which are essential and necessary, should be grounded upon human probability, and not on the sole power of God. Thus the Episodes of Circe, the Syrens, Polyphemus, etc. are necessary to the action of the *Odyssey*, and yet not humanly probable: yet Homer has artificially reduced them to human probability, by the simplicity and ignorance of the Phaeacians, before whom he causes those recitals to be made.

The next question is, where, and on what occasions

machines may be used ? It is certain Homer and Virgil made use of them every where, and scarce suffer any action to be performed without them. Petronius make this a precept: *Per ambages, deorumque ministeria*, etc. The gods are mentioned in the very proposition of their works, the invocation is addressed to them, and the whole narration is full of them. The gods are the causes of the action, they form the intrigue, and bring about the solution. The precept of Aristotle and Horace, that the unravelling of the plot should not proceed from a miracle or the appearance of a god, has place only in dramatic poetry, not in the epic. For it is plain, that both in the solution of the Iliad and Odyssey the gods are concerned : in the former, the deities meet to appease the anger of Achilles : Iris and Mercury are sent to that purpose, and Minerva eminently assists Achilles in the decisive combat with Hector. In the Odyssey, the same goodefs fights close by Ulysses against the suitors, and concludes that peace betwixt him and the Ithacensians, which compleats the poem.

We may therefore determine, that a machine is not an invention to extricate the poet out of any difficulty which embarrasses him : but that the presence of a divinity, and some action surprizing and extraordinary, are inserted into almost all the parts of his work, in order to render it more majestic and more admirable. But this mixture ought to be so made, that the machines might be retrenched without taking any thing from the action. At the same time it gives the readers a lesson of piety and virtue ; and teaches them, that the most brave and the most wise can do nothing, and attain nothing great and glorious, without the assistance of heaven. Thus the machinery crowns the whole work, and renders it at once marvellous, probable, and moral.



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Minerva's descent to Ithaca.

The poem opens within forty-eight days of the arrival of Ulysses in his dominions. He had now remained seven years in the island of Calypso, when the gods assembled in council proposed the method of his departure from thence, and his return to his native country. For this purpose it is concluded to send Mercury to Calypso, and Pallas immediately descends to Ithaca. She holds a conference with Telemachus, in the shape of Mentis king of the Taphians; in which she advises him to take a journey in quest of his father Ulysses, to Pylos and Sparta, where Nestor and Menelaus yet reigned: then, after having visibly displayed her divinity, disappears. The suitors of Penelope make great entertainments, and riot in her palace till night. Phemius sings to them the return of the Grecians, till Penelope puts a stop to the song. Some words arise between the suitors and Telemachus, who summons the council to meet the day following.

THE man, for wisdom's various arts renown'd,
Long exercis'd in woes, oh muse! resound.

N O T E S.

We shall proceed in the same method through the course of these annotations upon the *Odyssey*, as in those

Who, when his arms had wrought the destin'd fall
Of sacred Troy, and raz'd her heav'n-built wall,

upon the Iliad; considering Homer chiefly as a poet, endeavouring to make his beauties understood, and not to praise without a reason given. It is equally an extreme, on the one hand to think Homer has no human defects; and on the other to dwell so much upon those defects, as to depreciate his beauties. The greater part of critics form a general character, from the observation of particular errors, taken in their own oblique or imperfect views; which is as unjust, as to make a judgment of the beauty of a man's body from the shadow it happens to cast, in such or such a position. To convince the reader of this intended impartiality, we readily allow the Odyssey to be inferior to the Iliad in many respects. It has not that sublimity of spirit, or that enthusiasm of poetry; but then it must be allowed, if it be less noble, it is more instructive: the other abounds with more heroism, this with more morality. The Iliad gives us a draught of gods and heroes, of discord, of contentions, and scenes of slaughter; the Odyssey sets before us a scene more amiable, the land-skips of nature, the pleasures of private life, the duties of every station, the hospitality of antient times; a less busy, but more agreeable portrait. The Iliad concludes with the ruin, the Odyssey with the happiness of a nation. Horace was of the same opinion, as is evident from the epistle to Lollius.

*Seditione, dolis, scelere, atque libidine, et ira,
Iliacos intra muros peccatur et extra.
Rursus, quid virtus et quid sapientia possit,
Utile proposuit nobis exemplar Ulysses.*

ψ. 1. *The man, for wisdom, etc.*] Homer opens his poem with the utmost simplicity and modesty; he continually grows upon the



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Wand'ring from clime to clime, observant stray'd, 5
 Their manners noted, and their states survey'd.

*Non fumum ex fulgore, sed ex fumo dare lucem
 Cogitat, ut speciosa dehinc miracula promat.*

Cicero lays this down as a rule for the orator, *principia verecunda, non elatis intensa verbis*; and Horace for the poet, *Net sic incipies*, etc. He proposes the beginning of the *Odyssey* as a pattern for all future poems, and has translated them in his *Art of poetry*.

*Dic mihi, musa, virum, captae post tempora Trojae,
 Qui mores hominum multorum vidit, et urbes.*

May I be forgiven the arrogance, if I should offer a criticism upon this translation: the sufferings of Ulysses are the subject of the whole *Odyssey*, and yet Horace has omitted the mention of those sufferings: *ὅς μάλ᾽ ἀπολλὰ πλάγχθη*. There is another word also which seems essential, that is, *πολύτροπον*, this is likewise omitted. For the sufferings of Ulysses, and the wisdom by which he extricated himself from them, enter into the very design of the poem. But indeed in another place he has plainly had regard to all these circumstances,

*Qui domitor Trojae, multorum providus urbes
 Et mores hominum inspexit, latumque per aequor
 Dum sibi, dum sociis, reditum parat, aspera multa
 Pertulit ————— Epist. ad Loll.*

I must also refute a criticism of Rapin, who will have it, that the word, *πολύτροπος*, includes a character of craft and low cunning, unworthy of a brave spirit: but Eustathius admirably vindicates the poet in this respect; he shews us that *τρόπος* no where in Homer signifies *ἦθος*, or morals; and that it implies a man who could accommodate himself to every condition of life; one who, in the worst estate, had still a reserve to free himself from

On stormy seas unnumber'd toils he bore,
Safe with his friends to gain his natal shore :

It; it therefore, says he, signifies a man that, through experience, has learned wisdom. I have likewise the authority of Horace for this sense, in the above-cited passage,

Qui domitor Trojae, multorum providus urbes.

I take *providus*, in this place, to signify not only a man who noted the manners of various nations with care, but also one who, in calamity, could foresee methods to extricate himself from it. And surely nothing can be more unjust than what Rapin objects against Ulysses, in employing his wisdom only in his own preservation, while all his companions were lost: Homer himself sufficiently refutes this objection, and directly tells us, that he employed his wisdom in the care of their safety, but that they, through their folly, defeated his wisdom. The words of Homer, says Eustathius, shew that a wise man neglects not his friends in adversity. But, says Rapin, what could oblige Homer to begin with so dishonourable an action, and place the greatest weakness of his hero in the very frontispiece of his poem? and invoke his muse to sing the man who with difficulty saved himself, and suffered his companions to be destroyed? There had been some weight in this objection, if Ulysses had saved his own, with the loss of their lives; but I cannot see any dishonour, in his preserving himself by wisdom, when they destroyed themselves by folly: it was chiefly by storms that they perished; it can be no imputation to his character, not to be able to restrain the effects of a tempest: he did all that a wise man could do, he gave them such admonitions upon every emergency, that if they had pursued them, they had been preserved as well as Ulysses.

γ. 1. *For wisdom's various arts renown'd.*] Bossu's observation in relation to this epithet, πολυτροπος, given

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On herds devoted to the god of day ;

to Ulysses, is worth transcribing. The fable of the *Odyssæy*, says he, is wholly for the conduct and policy of a state : therefore the quality it requires is wisdom, but this virtue is of too large an extent for the simplicity which a just and precise character requires ; it is therefore requisite it should be limited. The great art of kings is the mystery of dissimulation. It is well known, that Lewis the eleventh, for the instruction of his son, reduced all the Latin language to these words only, viz. *Qui nescit dissimulare nescit regnare*. It was likewise by this practice that Saul began his reign, when he was first elected, and as yet full of the spirit of God. The first thing we read of him in holy writ is, † that he made as if he did not hear the words which seditious people spoke against him.

This then is the character which the Greek poet gives his Ulysses in the proposition of his poem ; he calls him *ἄνδρα πολύτροπον* ; to denote this prudent dissimulation, which disguised him so many ways, and put him upon taking so many shapes.

Without mentioning any thing of Circe, who detained him with her a whole year, and who was famous for the transformations she made of all sorts of persons ; the reader finds him at first with Calypso, the daughter of wise Atlas, who bore up the vast pillars that reached from earth to heaven, and whose knowledge penetrated into the depths of the unfathomable ocean : that is to say, who was ignorant of nothing in heaven, earth, or sea. And as the first product and principal part of so high, so solid, and so profound a knowledge, was to know how to conceal one's self ; this wise man called his daughter by a name that signified a *secret* *. The

† *Ille vero dissimulabat se audire.* Reg. lib. 1.

* *Καλύπτειν.*

The god vindictive doom'd them never more
(Ah men unbliss'd!) to touch that natal shore.

poet makes his hero, whom he designed for a politician, to stay seven whole years with this nymph. She taught him so well, that afterwards he lost no opportunity of putting her lessons in practice: for he does nothing without a disguise. At his parting from Ogygia he is cast upon the isle of Phaeacia: as kind as his reception was, yet he stays till the night before he went off ere he would discover himself. From thence he goes to Ithaca: the first adventure that happened to him there was with Minerva, the most prudent among the deities, as Ulysses was the most prudent among men. She says so expressly in that very passage. Nor did they fail to disguise themselves. Minerva takes upon her the shape of a shepherd, and Ulysses tells her he was obliged to fly from Crete, because he had murdered the son of king Idomeneus. The goddess discovers herself first, and commends him particularly, because these artifices were so easy and natural to him, that they seemed to be born with him. Afterwards the hero, under the form of a beggar, deceives first of all Eumeus, then his son, and last of all his wife, and every body else, till he found an opportunity of punishing his enemies, to whom he discovered not himself till he killed them, namely, on the last night. After his discovering himself in the palace, he goes the next day to deceive his father, appearing at first under a borrowed name; before he would give him joy of his return. Thus he takes upon him all manner of shapes, and dissembles to the very last. But the poet joins to this character a valour and a constancy which render him invincible in the most daring and desperate adventures.

ψ. 3. *Who, when his arms had wrought the destin'd fall
Of sacred Troy ———*

Whence is it that Ulysses is said to have overthrown
Troy,

Oh snatch some portion of these acts from fate,
Celestial muse ! and to our world relate.

Troy, and not Achilles, who was of more remarkable courage than Ulysses ? Eustathius tells us, that the destruction of Troy ought to be ascribed chiefly to Ulysses, as he not only took away the Palladium, but was the inventor of the stratagem of the wooden horse, by which that city was conquered. Virgil, in his second book of the *Æneis* gives us a noble description of its destruction, by which we find that Ulysses was not only the contriver of its ruin, but bore a great share in the actions of the night in which that city was overturned.

ψ. 9. *Vain toils ! their impious folly, etc.*] By this single trait, Homer marks an essential difference between the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* : namely, that in the former poem the people perished by the folly of their kings :

Quicquid delirant reges, plectuntur Achivi.

In this, the people perish by their own folly, while their prince omits nothing to procure their felicity. A plain reason why the *Odyssey* is more calculated for the people than the *Iliad*. Dacier.

ψ. 13. *Oh snatch some portion of these acts from fate.*] It may be asked why the poet invokes the muse to recount only part of the sufferings of Ulysses ? and why those words, *to us also*, are inserted ? To the first it may be answered, that an heroic poem dwells chiefly upon incidents of importance, and passes over every thing that does not contribute to raise our idea of the hero, or to the main design of the poem : to the other Eustathius answers several ways ; either, says he, the word *χ* is to be taken as an expletive, as it is in a thousand places in Homer ; or it means that this is a subject so considerable, that it will be a theme to many poets : or that being a true history it had spread over many nations of the world, and that Homer himself received the story of the poem from *Ægypt* ; and then

Now at their native realms the Greeks arriv'd ; 15
All who the wars of ten long years surviv'd,

the meaning will be, " Sing, o muse, to the Greeks, " as well as to other nations, the sufferings of Ulysses." I should prefer the first as being the most natural : the rest seem forced, and consequently improper for the opening of a poem, where the utmost plainness is necessary ; especially, if we consider that Ulysses was a Grecian, and it is not probable that the Grecians should be the least acquainted with the story, or the latest to celebrate the actions, of a Grecian.

ψ. 15. *Now at their native realms the Greeks arriv'd.*] It is necessary, for the better understanding of the poem, to fix the period of time from which it takes its beginning : Homer, as Eustathius observes, does not begin with the wanderings of Ulysses, he steps at once into the latter end of his actions, and leaves the preceeding story to be told by way of narration. Thus in his Iliad, he dates his poem from the anger of Achilles, which happened almost at the conclusion of the Trojan war. From hence Horace drew his observation in his Arte Poet.

*Semper ad eventum festinat ; et in medias res,
Non secus at notas, auditorum rapit.*

There are but forty-eight days from the departure of Ulysses from Calypso, to his discovery in Ithaca ; he had been one year with Circe, and seven with Calypso, when the gods dispatched Mercury to that goddess ; from which point of time we are to date the Odyssey.

This observation gives a reason why the poet invokes the muse to recount the wanderings of this hero in part only ; for Ulysses, as appears from the beginning of the ninth book, after he left the shores of Troy, was driven to Ismarus of the Ciconians. An historian must have begun from the fall of Troy, and related his wandrings with truth and order ; for history is chiefly

And 'scap'd the perils of the gulfy main.

Ulysses, sole of all the victor train,

An exile from his dear paternal coast,

Deplor'd his absent queen, and empire lost. 20

Calypso in her caves constrain'd his stay,

With sweet, reluctant, amorous delay :

In vain—for now the circling years disclose

The day predestin'd to reward his woes.

At length his Ithaca is giv'n by fate, 25

Where yet new labours his arrival wait :

At length their rage the hostile Pow'rs restrain,

All but the ruthless monarch of the main.

for instruction : but a poet takes another method, and disposes every circumstance arbitrarily ; he chuses or rejects, as suites best with his principal design, and in such a manner as to give at once delight and instruction.

ψ. 21. *Calypso in her cave constrain'd his stay.*] To the remark before cited of Bossu, upon the abode of Ulysses with Calypso, may be added this of the abbe Fraguier: that his residing seven years in the caves of Calypso, (the goddess of secrecy) may only mean that he remained so long hid from the knowlege and enquiry of all men; or that whatever befel him in all that time was lost to history, or made no part in the poem.

ψ. 28. *All but the ruthless monarch of the main.*] It may be asked, why Neptune is thus enraged against Ulysses ? Homer himself tells us, it was because that hero had put out the eye of his son Cyclops. But if we take Neptune by way of allegory for the ocean, the passage implies, that the sufferings of Ulysses were chiefly by sea ; and therefore poetry, which adds a

But now the god, remote, a heav'nly guest
 In Æthiopia grac'd the genial feast, 30
 (A race divided, whom with sloping rays
 The rising and descending sun surveys)
 There on the world's extremest verge rever'd,
 With hecatombs and pray'r in pomp prefer'd,
 Distant he lay : while in the bright abodes 35
 Of high Olympus, Jove conven'd the gods :

grandeur to the meanest circumstance, introduces the god of it as his greatest enemy. Eustathius.

ψ. 30. *In Æthiopia*, etc.] Strabo, in his first book, delivers his opinion, that "the antient Grecians includ-
 'ed all those people who lived upon the southern ocean,
 'from east to west, in the general name of Æthiopians,
 'and that it was not confined to those only who lay
 'south of Egypt." Ptolomy says, that "under the
 'Zodiac, from east to west, inhabit the Æthiopians,
 'black of colour." And elsewhere the same geogra-
 pher divides Æthiopia into the eastern and the western.
 The eastern and western Æthiopians were separated by
 the Arabian or Egyptian gulf; which though never
 mentioned by Homer, as Aristarchus remarked, yet
 it is not probable, says Strabo, that he should be igno-
 rant of it, it being but a thousand stadia distant from
 the Mediterranean, when he knew the Egyptian Thebes,
 which was four times as far off. Strab. Plin. Spondan.

I will not repeat what was observed upon the gods
 being gone to the Æthiopians, in the first book of the
 Iliad; it is sufficient in general to observe, that the
 Æthiopians were a people very religious towards the
 gods, and that they held a pompous feast twelve days
 annually to their honour; and in particular, that the
 poet very judiciously makes use of this solemnity to re-
 move Neptune out of the way, who was the enemy of

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Th' assembly thus the fire supreme addrest,
 Ægythus' fate revolving in his breast,
 Whom young Orestes to the dreary coast
 Of Pluto sent, a blood-polluted ghost.

40

Perverse mankind ! whose wills, created free,
 Charge all their woes on absolute decree ;
 All to the dooming gods their guilt translate,
 And follies are miscall'd the crimes of fate.
 When to his lust Ægythus gave the rein,
 Did fate, or we, th' adult'rous act constrain ?

45

Ulysses, that he may, with greater security, bring off
 his hero from Calypso's island. Eustathius.

γ. 41. *Jupiter's speech.*] The solemnity and sententiousness of this speech is taken notice of by Eustathius ; and surely poetry must be highly valuable, when it delivers such excellent instructions. It contained the whole of religion among the antients ; and made philosophy more agreeable. This passage is an instance of it, a passage worthy of a Christian ; it shews us that the supreme being is sovereignly good ; that he rewards the just, and punishes the unjust ; and that the folly of man, and not the decree of heaven, is the cause of human calamity.

γ. 45. *Ægythus.*] It is difficult to find a reason why, in the original, Jupiter should give such an honourable appellation to Ægythus, as ἀνύμωτος, *unblameable*, who had dishonoured the bed of Agamemnon, and taken his life away ; especially in that very instant when he condemns the fact with so great solemnity : Eustathius says, that Homer, an enemy to censure and invective, introduces that god as having respect only to his good qualities, and commending him for his general character ; and adds, that it had been an indecency in the poet to have given countenance to that base custom by the

Did fate, or we, when great Atrides dy'd,

Urge the bold traitor to the regicide?

Hermes I sent, while yet his soul remain'd

Sincere from royal blood, and faith profan'd ; 30

authority of Jupiter. Dacier is not satisfy'd with this reason, and tells us that Homer gives Ægyſthus this title, to vindicate Jupiter from the imputation of his crimes: he gives us to understand, that heaven is not the cause of man's failings ; that he is by creation able to act virtuously, and that it is through his own misconduct that he deviates into evil; and therefore the meaning is this; ' Jupiter calling to mind Ægyſthus, that Ægyſthus, ' whom he had created wife and virtuous, and made ' capable to sustain that character.' And this agrees admirably with the beginning of the speech of Jupiter, who there vindicates his own divinity.

But if this should seem too refined, it may be sufficient to take the word in that good sense which Ægyſthus might have deserved for many good qualities: thus Achilles is called the *swift of foot*, even while he stands, or sleeps ; the first being his general character. It may be further confirmed by a passage something resembling it in the holy scriptures : the Egyptian midwives were guilty of a lye to Pharaoh, and yet God pardons it, and blesses them : he blesses them not because they lyed, but because they preserved the children of the Israelites.

ψ. 49. *Hermes I sent*, etc.] It would be endless to observe every moral passage in the *Odyssey*, the whole of it being but one lesson of morality. But surely it must be a pleasure to the reader to learn what notions the antients had of a deity, from the oldest book extant, except the book of Moses.

Jupiter here declares that he never fails to warn mankind from evil, and that he had sent Mercury for this purpose to Ægyſthus. It may be asked what is

To warn the wretch, that young Orestes grown
To manly years should re-assert the throne.
Yet impotent of mind, and uncontrol'd,
He plung'd into the gulf which heav'n foretold.

Here paus'd the god, and pensive thus replies, 55
Minerva^s graceful with her azure eyes.

O thou ! from whom the whole creation springs,
The source of pow'r on earth deriv'd to kings !

this Mercury whom Jupiter sends ? It is the light of nature, which heaven implants in the breast of every man : and which, as Cicero says, is not only more antient than the world, but co-eval with the master of the world himself. He writes to this effect. *There was from the beginning such a thing as reason, a direct emanation from nature itself, which prompted to good, and averted from evil. A reason which did not then become a law, when it was first reduced to writing, but was so even from the moment it existed, and it existed from ever, of an equal date with the divine intelligence : it is the true and primordial law, proper to command and to forbid, it is the reason of the great Jupiter.*

That reason of the supreme being is here called Mercury ; that reason flowing from God, which is constantly dictating to the most corrupt hearts, *this is good, or this is evil.* Hence arose an antient proverb, recorded by Simplicius, *Reason is a Mercury to all men.* Epictetus [lib. 3. Arrian.] says, *Apollo knew that Laius would not obey his oracle. Apollo nevertheless did not neglect to prophesy to Laius those evils that threatened him. The goodness of the divinity never fails to advertise mankind ; that source of truth is ever open and free : but men are ever incredulous, disobedient and rebellious.* Dacier.

ψ. 57. *Minerva's speech.*] It may be asked what relation Ulysses has to Ægysthus, that the mention of the one should immediately give occasion for the remem-

His death was equal to the direful deed ;
 So may the man of blood be doom'd to bleed ! 60
 But grief and rage alternate wound my breast
 For brave Ulysses, still by fate oppress'd.
 Amidst an isle, around whose rocky shore
 The forests murmur, and the surges roar,
 The blameless hero from his wish'd-for home 65
 A goddess guards in her enchanted dome.
 (Atlas her sire, to whose far-piercing eye
 The wonders of the deep expanded lie ;

brance of the other ? and it may appear unnatural in the poet to give rise to his poem by so unexpected a transition from Ægythus to Ulysses. Eustathius vindicates Homer, by shewing that it is not only beautiful but natural, to take rise from what offers itself to our immediate observation. What can be more natural, when Jupiter is relating how he punishes the wicked, than for Wisdom or Minerva to suggest, that the good ought to be rewarded ? There is no forced introduction ; no artful preparation, but the whole arises from the occasion, which is a great beauty. Eustathius.

ψ. 63. *Amidst an isle, etc.*] There was, according to true history, such an island of Calypso, of which Strabo writes ; that Solon gives an account of the island Atlantis bordering upon Egypt, and that he went thither to make enquiry, and learned that an island was once there, but by time was vanished. Eustathius.

ψ. 67. *Atlas her sire, to whose far-piercing eye
 The wonders of the deep expanded lie ;
 Th' eternal columns which on earth he rears
 End in the starry vault, and prop the spheres.*]

Atlas is here said to understand all the deeps of the sea : but the epithet, ἐλὸσφρον, applied to him, has two different significations. It implies either, *one whose thoughts*

Th' eternal columns which on earth he rears
End in the starry vault, and prop the spheres.) 70

By his fair daughter is the chief confin'd,
Who sooths to dear delight his anxious mind :
Successless all her soft careffes prove,
To banish from his breast his country's love ;

are full of terrible and dismal things, or one who has infinite knowlege and unbounded views, and it is doubtful which of them Homer means. To reconcile both, may we not think our author had heard something of the antient tradition which makes Atlas the same person with Enoch, and represents him as a great astronomer, who prophecied of the universal deluge, and exhorted mankind to repentance ? Therefore he named his son Methuselah, to shew that after his death the waters should overspread the face of the earth. His continual lamentations on this occasion caused him to be called the Weeper ; for the world is always an enemy to melancholy predictions. Thus Homer, upon the credit of this tradition, might very well call Atlas, one whose thoughts ran upon dismal things, or one whose views and cares were vastly extended.

I insist no otherwise upon this, but as a conjecture, yet it is further strengthened by what follows in the next lines : *That Atlas sustains those columns which being fixed upon the earth support the heavens.* This is generally interpreted of his great skill in astronomy and geography. But may not the reason be more particular ? Since Atlas or Enoch had prophecied of the deluge, and since that prediction was looked upon as the effect of his skill in astronomy ; might it not be said he knew the abysses of the sea, and sustained the pillars of heaven, to express that he knew how the fountains of the deep, and the waters above the heavens, should unite to drown the earth ?

As to the image of the pillars of heaven, it is fre-

To see the smoke from his lov'd palace rise, 75
 While the dear isle in distant prospect lies,
 With what contentment could he close his eyes?
 And will omnipotence neglect to save
 The suffering virtue of the wife and brave?
 Must he, whose altars on the Phrygian shore 80
 With frequent rites, and pure, avow'd thy pow'r,

quent in the sacred books, and used to express the height of vast mountains. (Pindar calls *Ætna* the *ἑρπυρία κίονα*;) and there might probably be something more particular that furnished Homer with this idea; I mean the pillars of Hercules, well-known in his time, and neighbouring to the mountain he describes. Dacier.

See the description of this mountain in the fourth book of Virgil, where the same image is preserved without any hint of allegory: as indeed it is no more than a poetical manner of expressing the great height and extensive prospect of the mountain.

ψ. 75. *To see the smoke from his lov'd palace rise.*] There is an agreeable tenderness in this image, and nothing can better paint the ardent desire a man naturally has to review his native country after a long absence. This is still stronger than that which Cicero extols in several places of his works, that Ulysses preferred the sight of Ithaca to the immortality proffered him by Calypso. He here desires to purchase, at the price of his life, the pleasure, not of returning to his country, but even seeing at a distance the very smoke of it. Dacier.

There are some things dispersed in this speech of Pallas, which I shall lay together; as that Minerva makes it an aggravation to the calamity of Ulysses, to be detained by a goddess that loves him; that he is inclosed in an island; and she adds, round which the seas flow; as if that was not common to all islands; but these ex-

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Be doom'd the worst of human ills to prove,
Unblest'd, abandon'd to the wrath of Jove?

Daughter! what words have pass'd thy lips unweigh'd?
(Reply'd the Thund'rer to the martial maid) 85

Deem not unjustly by my doom oppress'd
Of human race the wisest and the best.

Neptune, by pray'r repentant rarely won,
Afflicts the chief, t' avenge his giant son,

pressions are used to shew the impossibility of the escape of Ulysses, without the interposition of Jupiter.

In the conclusion she observes, that Ulysses never neglected to sacrifice before Troy: this is said to shew the great piety of Ulysses, who not only paid his sacrifices in Ithaca, where he abounded in riches, but amongst strangers in an enemy's country, where there might be a scarcity of offerings. Eustathius.

ψ. 84. *Daughter! what words, etc.*] This verse is frequently repeated both in the Iliad and the Odyssey; it has here a particular energy. Jupiter reproves Minerva for supposing he could ever be unmindful of an hero so pious as Ulysses. It is spoken with vehemence; an instance, says Eustathius, that it is not only equitable, but an attribute of divinity, for rulers to remember those who serve them faithfully.

ψ. 89. *T' avenge his giant-son.*] It is artful in the poet to tell the reader the occasion of the sufferings of Ulysses in the opening of the poem; it is a justice due to his character, to shew that his misfortunes are not the consequence of his crimes, but the effect of Neptune's anger.

It is observable, that Homer does not stop to explain how Ulysses put out the eye of the Cyclops: he hastens forward into the middle of his poem, and leaves that for the future narration of Ulysses.

Whose visual orb Ulysses robb'd of light ; 90
 Great Polypheme, of more than mortal might !
 Him young Thoosa bore, (the bright increase
 Of Phorcys, dreaded in the sounds and seas :)
 Whom Neptune ey'd with bloom of beauty blest,
 And in his cave the yielding nymph compress'd. 95
 For this, the god constrains the Greek to roam,
 A hopeless exile from his native home,
 From death alone exempt — but cease to mourn ;
 Let all combine t' atchieve his wish'd return :
 Neptune aton'd, his wrath shall now refrain, 100
 Or thwart the synod of the gods in vain.

Father and king ador'd ! Minerva cry'd,
 Since all who in th' Olympian bow'r reside
 Now make the wand'ring Greek their public care,
 Let Hermes to th' * Atlantic isle repair ; 105
 Bid him, arriv'd in bright Calypso's court,
 The sanction of th' assembled Pow'rs report :
 'That wise Ulysses to his native land
 Must speed, obedient to their high command.
 Mean time Telemachus, the blooming heir 110
 Of sea-girt Ithaca, demands my care :

* Ogygia.

γ. 110. *Mean time Telemachus—demands my care, etc.*]
 Rapin has raised several objections against this piece of
 conduct in Homer: he tells us that the action of the
 Odyssey is imperfect, that it begins with the voyages of
 Telemachus, and ends with those of Ulysses: that the four
 first books are all concerning Telemachus: that his voy-
 age bears no proportion to that of Ulysses; that it con-

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tributes nothing to his return, which is brought about by Jupiter, and the assistance of the Phaeacians ; that this gave occasion to Beni, in his academical discourses, to assert, that the fable of the *Odyssey* is double, that the four first books of it are neither episode, nor part of an action, nor have any connection with the rest of the work.

I am of opinion, that these objections are made with too great severity ; the destruction of the suitors is the chief hinge upon which the poem turns, as it contributes chiefly to the re-establishment of Ulysses in his country and regality ; and whatever contributes to this end, contributes to the principal action, and is of a piece with the rest of the poem : and that this voyage does so is evident, in that it gives a defeat to the suitors, and controls their insolence ; it preserves Ulysses's throne and bed inviolate, in that it gives Telemachus courage to resist their attempts : it sets his character in a fair point of light, who is the second personage of the poem, and is to have a great share in the future actions of it.

Eustathius judiciously observes, that Homer here prepares the way for the defeat of the suitors, the chief design of his poem ; and lays the ground-work of probability on which he intends to build his poem, and reconcile it to the rules of credibility.

If it be asked for what end this voyage of Telemachus is made ; the answer is, to enquire after Ulysses : so that whatever episodes are interwoven, Ulysses is still in view ; and whatever Telemachus acts, is undertaken solely upon his account ; and consequently, whatever is acted, contributes to the principal design, the restoration of Ulysses. So that the fable is entire, and the action not double.

It is to be remembered also, that the sufferings of Ulysses are the subject of the poem ; his personal calamities are not only intended, but his domestic misfortunes ; and by this conduct Homer shews us the extent

'Tis mine to form his green, unpractis'd years,
 In sage debates, surrounded with his peers,
 To save the state; and timely to restrain
 The bold intrusion of the suitor-train; 115
 Who croud his palace, and with lawless pow'r
 His herds and flocks in feastful rites devour.
 To distant Sparta, and the spacious waste
 Of sandy Pyle, the royal youth shall haste.

of his misfortunes: his queen is attempted, his throne threatened, and his wealth consumed in riot; Ulysses suffers in Telemachus, and in every circumstance of life is unhappy.

ψ. 112. *'Tis mine to form his green unpractis'd years, etc.*]

In this the poet draws the out-lines of what he is to fill up in the four subsequent books: and nothing can give us a greater idea of his unbounded invention, than his building upon so plain a foundation such a noble superstructure: he entertains us with variety of episodes, historical relations, and manners of those antient times. It must be confessed, that the characters in the *Odyssey*, and the number of the chief actors, are but few; and yet the poet never tires, he varies and diversifies the story so happily, that he is continually opening new scenes to engage our attention. He resembles his own Proteus, he is capable of all shapes, yet in all shapes the same deity.

ψ. 118. *To distant Sparta, and the spacious waste
 Of sandy Pyle ———]*

Rapin is very severe upon this conduct. When Telemachus, says he, is to search for his father in the courts of Greece, he cannot make the least progress without Minerva; it is she who inspires his thoughts, and assists in the execution. Could not honour, duty, or nature, have moved his heart towards an absent father? The machine, adds he, has not the least ap-

There, warm with filial love, the cause enquire 120

That from his realm retards his god-like fire:

Deliv'ring early to the voice of fame

The promise of a great, immortal name.

She said: the sandals of celestial mold

Fledg'd with ambrosial plumes, and rich with gold, 125

Surround her feet; with these sublime she sails

Th' aerial space, and mounts the winged gales:

O'er earth and ocean wide prepar'd to soar,

Her dreaded arm a beamy jav'lin bore,

Pond'rous and vast; which, when her fury burns, 130

Proud tyrants humbles, and whole hosts o'erturns.

From high Olympus prone her flight she bends,

And in the realm of Ithaca descends.

pearance of probability, inasmuch as the goddess conducts him to every place, except only where Ulysses resides; of which she ought by no means to be ignorant, upon the account of her divinity.

But surely nothing can be more natural, than for a son, in order to gain intelligence of an absent father, to enquire in those places, and of those persons, where and from whom he is most likely to have information. Such is the conduct of Telemachus: and poetry, which delights in the wonderful, because this conduct agrees with wisdom, ascribes it to Minerva the goddess of it. No doubt but Minerva knew where Ulysses resided: but men must act as men, such an immediate interposition, as Rapin requires, had stopped at once the fountain of the poet's invention. If what a poet invents be natural, it is justifiable; and he may give the rein to his imagination, if he restrain it from running into extravagance and wildness.

Her lineaments divine the grave disguise
 Of Mentès' form conceal'd from human eyes : 135
 (Mentès, the monarch of the Taphian land)
 A glitt'ring spear wav'd awful in her hand.
 There in the portal plac'd, the heav'n-born maid
 Enormous riot and mis-rule survey'd.

ψ. 136. *Mentès, the monarch of the Taphian land.*] We are told by tradition, that Homer was so sensible of friendship, that to do honour to his particular friends, he immortalized their names in his poems. In the Iliad he has shewn his gratitude to Tychius; and in the Odyssey, to Mentès, Phemius, and Mentor. This Mentès was a famous merchant of the isle of Leucade, who received Homer at Smyrna, and made him his companion in all his voyages. It is to this Mentès we owe the two poems of Homer; for the poet, in all probability, had never wrote them without those lights and informations he received, and the discoveries he was enabled to make, by those travels. Homer is not contented to give his name to the king of the Taphians, but feigns also that the goddess of wisdom chose to appear in his shape, preferably to that of all the kings who were nearer neighbours to Ithaca. Eustathius thinks there might have been a real king of Taphos of this name, who was a friend of Ulysses. This may possibly be; but I would chuse to adhere rather to the old tradition, as it does honour to friendship. Dacier.

ψ. 139. *Enormous riot and mis-rule.*] This is the first appearance of the suitors; and the poet has drawn their pictures in such colours, as are agreeable to their characters through the whole poem. They are, as Horace expresses it,

———— *Fruges consumere nati,*
Sponsi Penelopes, Nebulones ————

On hides of beeves before the palace gate, 140

(Sad spoils of luxury) the suitors fate.

With rival art, and ardor in their mien,

At chefs they vie, to captivate the queen,

Divining of their loves. Attending nigh,

A menial train the flowing bowl supply : 145

The poet gives a fine contrast between them and Telemachus ; he entertains himself with his own thoughts, weighs the sum of things, and beholds, with a virtuous sorrow, the disorders of the suitors : he appears, (like Ulysses among his transformed companions in the tenth book,) a wise man, among brutes.

Y. 143. *At chefs they vie, to captivate the queen,*

Divining of their loves —]

There are great disputes what this game was, at which the suitors played. Athenaeus relates it from Apian the grammarian, who had it from Cteson, a native of Ithaca, that the sport was in this manner. The number of the suitors being 108, they equally divided their men, or balls ; that is to say, 54 on each side ; these were placed on the board opposite to each other. Between the two sides was a vacant space, in the midst of which was the main mark, or queen, the point which all were to aim at. They took their turns by lot ; he who took or displaced that mark, got his own in its place ; and if, by a second man, he again took it, without touching any of the others, he won the game ; and it passed as an omen of obtaining his mistress. This principal mark, or queen, was called by whatever name the gamesters pleased ; and the suitors gave it the name of Penelope.

It is said, this game was invented by Palamedes during the siege of Troy. [Sophocles in Palam.] Eustath. Spondan. Dacier.

Others apart the spacious hall prepare,
 And form the costly feast with busy care.
 There young Telemachus, his bloomy face
 Glowing celestial-sweet with god-like grace,
 Amid the circle shines : but hope and fear 150
 (Painful vicissitude!) his bosom tear.
 Now imag'd in his mind, he sees restor'd
 In peace and joy, the people's rightful Lord ;
 The proud oppressors fly the vengeful sword. }
 While his fond soul these fancied triumphs swell'd, 155
 The stranger guest the royal youth beheld.
 Griev'd that a visitant so long should wait
 Unmark'd, unhonour'd, at a monarch's gate ;
 Instant he flew with hospitable haste,
 And the new friend with courteous air embrac'd. 160
 Stranger ! whoe'er thou art, securely rest
 Affianc'd in my faith, a friendly guest :
 Approach the dome, the social banquet share,
 And then the purpose of thy soul declare.
 Thus affable and mild, the prince precedes, 165
 And to the dome th' unknown celestial leads.

ψ. 157. *Griev'd that a visitant so long should wait.*]
 The reader will lose much of the pleasure of this poem,
 if he reads it without the reflection, that he peruses one
 of the most antient books in the world ; it sets before
 him persons, places, and actions that existed three thou-
 sand years ago : here we have an instance of the huma-
 nity of those early ages : Telemachus pays a reverence
 to this stranger, only because he is a stranger : he at-
 tends him in person, and welcomes him with all the open-
 ness of antient hospitality.

The spear receiving from her hand, he plac'd
Against a column, fair with sculpture grac'd ;
Where seemly rang'd in peaceful order stood
Ulysses' arms, now long difus'd to blood. 170

He led the goddess to the sovereign seat,
Her feet supported with a stool of state ;
(A purple carpet spread the pavement wide)
Then drew his seat, familiar to her side ;
Far from the suitor-train, a brutal croud, 175

With insolence, and wine, elate and loud ;
Where the free guest, unnoted, might relate,
If haply conscious, of his father's fate.

The golden ew'r a maid obsequious brings,
Replenish'd from the cool, translucent springs ; 180
With copious water the bright vase supplies

A silver laver, of capacious size :
They wash. The tables in fair order spread,
They heap the glitt'ring canisters with bread :
Viands of various kinds allure the taste, 185
Of choicest sort and flavour, rich repast !

ψ. 185. etc. *The feast describ'd.*] There is nothing that has drawn more ridicule upon Homer, than the frequent descriptions of his entertainments ; it has been judged, that he was more than ordinarily delighted with them, since he omits no opportunity to describe them ; nay, his temperance has not been unsuspected, according to that verse of Horace,

Laudibus arguitur vini vinosus Homerus.

But we must not condemn without stronger evidence : a man may commend a sumptuous entertainment, or good

Delicious wines th' attending herald brought;
 The gold gave lustre to the purple draught.
 Lur'd with the vapour of the fragrant feast,
 In rush'd the suitors with voracious haste : 190
 Marshal'd in order due, to each a few'r
 Presents, to bath his hands, a radiant ew'r.
 Luxurious then they feast. Observant round
 Gay, stripling youths the brimming goblets crown'd.
 The rage of hunger quell'd, they all advance,
 And form to measur'd airs the mazy dance :

wines, without being either a drunkard or a glutton. But since there are so many entertainments described in the poem, it may not be improper to give this some explanation.

They wash before the feast; perhaps, says Eustathius, because they always at the feast made libations to the gods. The ewer was of gold, the vessel from whence the water was poured of silver, and the cups, out of which they drank, were of gold.

A damsel attends *Mentes*, but heralds wait upon the suitors: Eustathius observes a decency in this conduct; the suitors were lewd debauchees, and consequently a woman of modesty would have been an improper attendant upon such a company. Beautiful youths attended the company in quality of cup-bearers.

A matron who has charge of the household (*ταμιν*) brings in the bread and the cold meats, for so Eustathius interprets *ἑίστατα*; an officer, whose employ it was to portion out the victuals, brings in the meats that furnished out the rest of the entertainment; and after the feast, a bard diverts them with vocal and instrumental music.

Dacier is in great pain about the cold victuals; she is afraid lest the reader should think them the leavings

To Phemius was consign'd the chorded lyre,
Whose hand reluctant touch'd the warbling wire :
Phemius, whose voice divine could sweetest sing -
High strains responsive to the vocal string. 200

Mean while, in whispers to his heavenly guest
His indignation thus the prince express'd.

Indulge my rising grief, whilst these (my friend)
With song and dance the pompous revel end.

of a former day ; and tells us they might possibly be in the nature of our cold tongues, jambons, etc. But I think such fears to be groundless : we must have reference to the customs of those early ages ; and if it was customary for cold meats to be served up, (neither is it necessary to suppose them the leavings of the former entertainment) it can be no disgrace to the hospitality of Telemachus.

ψ. 197. *To Phemius was consign'd the chorded lyre.*]
In antient times, princes entertained in their families certain learned and wise men, who were both poets and philosophers, and not only made it their business to amuse and delight, but to promote wisdom and morality. Ulysses, at his departure for Troy, left one of these with Penelope : and it was usual to consign, in this manner, the care of their wives and families to the poets of those days, as appears from a signal passage in the third book, verse (of the original) 267, etc. To this man Homer gives the name of Phemius ; to celebrate one of his friends, who was so called, and who had been his preceptor, says Eustathius. I must add one remark, that though he places his master here in no very good company, yet he guards his character from any imputation, by telling us, that he attended the suitors by compulsion. This is not only a great instance of his gratitude, but also of his tenderness and delicacy.

Light is the dance, and doubly sweet the lays, 205
 When, for the dear delight, another pays.
 His treasur'd stores these cormorants consume,
 Whose bones, defrauded of a regal tomb
 And common turf, lie naked on the plain,
 Or doom'd to welter in the whelming main. 210
 Should he return, that troop so blithe and bold,
 With purple robes inwrought, and stiff with gold,
 Precipitant in fear, would wing their flight,
 And curse their cumbrous pride's unwieldy weight.
 But ah I dream! — th' appointed hour is fled, 215
 And hope, too long with vain delusion fed,
 Deaf to the rumour of fallacious fame,
 Gives to the roll of death his glorious name!
 With venial freedom let me now demand
 Thy name, thy lineage, and paternal land: 220
 Sincere, from whence began thy course, recite,
 And to what ship I owe the friendly freight?
 Now first to me this visit dost thou daign,
 Or number'd in my father's social train?
 All who deserv'd his choice, he made his own, 225
 And curious much to know, he far was known.

ψ. 225. All who deserv'd his choice —] It is evident, from this, and many places in the Iliad, that hospitality was hereditary; an happiness and honour peculiar to those heroic ages. And surely nothing can set the character of Ulysses in a more agreeable point of light, than what Telemachus here delivers of it: 'He was the friend of all mankind.' Eustathius observes, that ἐπίσπορος has a middle signification; that it implies, that Ulysses

My birth I boast (the blue-ey'd virgin cries)
 From great Anchialus, renown'd and wise :
 Mentos my name ; I rule the Taphian race,
 Whose bounds the deep circumfluent waves embrace :
 A duteous people, and industrious isle,
 To naval arts inur'd, and stormy toil.
 Freight'd with iron from my native land,
 I steer my voyage to the Brutian strand ;
 To gain by commerce, for the labour'd mafs,
 A just proportion of refulgent brass.

behaved benevolently to all men ; or, that all men behaved benevolently to Ulysses ; either sense makes Ulysses a very amiable person : he must be a friend to all men, to whom all men are friends.

ψ. 234, *I steer my voyage to the Brutian strand.*] In the country of the Brutians, in the lower part of Italy, was a town called Themese. That Homer here meant this city, and not one of the same name in Cyprus, appears not only because this was famous for works of brass, but because, as Strabo observes, Ithaca lay in the direct way from Taphos to this city of the Brutii ; whereas it was considerably out of the way to pass by Ithaca to that of Cyprus. The same author says, that the rooms for preparing of brass were remaining in his time, though then out of use. Ovid. Met. 15.

Hippotodaeque domos regis, Temesesque metalla.

And Statius, Sylv.

——— *se totis Temese dedit hausta metallis.*

Bochart is of opinion, that the name of Temese was given to this town by the Phoenicians, from the brass it produced, Temes, in their language, signifying fusion of metals : an art to which the Phoenicians much applied themselves. Eustat. Dacier.

Far from your capital my ship resides
 At Reithrus, and secure at anchor rides ;
 Where waving groves on airy Neion grow,
 Supremely tall, and shade the deeps below. 240
 Thence to re-visit your imperial dome,
 An old hereditary guest I come :
 Your father's friend. Laertes can relate
 Our faith unspotted, and its early date ;
 Who prest with heart-corroding grief and years, 245
 To the gay court a rural shed prefers,

ψ. 245. *Laertes's retirement.*] This most beautiful passage of Laertes has not escaped the censure of the critics : they say he acts an unmanly part, he forgets that he is a king, and reduces himself unworthily into the condition of a servant. Eustathius gives two reasons for his retirement, which answer those objections ; the first is, that he could not endure to see the outrage and insolence of the suitors ; the second, that his grief for Ulysses makes him abandon society, and prefer his vineyard to his court. This is undoubtedly the picture of human nature under affliction ; for sorrow loves solitude. Thus it is, as Dacier well observes, that Menedemus, in Terence, laments his lost son : Menedemus is the picture of Laertes. Nor does it make any difference, that the one is a king, the other a person of private station : kings are but ennobled humanity, and are liable, as other men, to as great, if not greater, sensibility.

The word ἐπὶ ζῶντα (*creeping about his vineyard*) has also given offence, as it carries an idea of meanness with it ; but Eustathius observes, that it excellently expresses the melancholy of Laertes, and denotes no meanness of spirit : the same word is applied to the great

Where sole of all his train, a matron sage
 Supports with homely food his drooping age,
 With feeble steps from marshalling his vines
 Returning sad, when toilsom day declines.

250

With friendly speed, induc'd by erring fame,
 To hail Ulysses' safe return I came :
 But still the frown of some celestial pow'r
 With envious joy retards the blisful hour.
 Let not your soul be sunk in sad despair ;
 He lives, he breathes this heav'nly vital air,
 Among a savage race, whose shelfy bounds
 With ceaseless roar the foaming deep surrounds.

255

Achilles in the Iliad, when he laments at the obsequies
 of Patroclus ; and Horace no doubt had it in his view,

—*Tacitum sylvas inter-reptare salubres.*

§. 257. *Among a savage race, etc.*] It is the ob-
 servation of Eustathius, that what Minerva here delivers
 bears resemblance to the oracles, in which part is false,
 part true : that Ulysses is detained in an island, is a
 truth ; that he is detained by barbarians, a falsehood :
 this is done by the goddess, that she may be thought to
 be really a man, as she appears to be ; she speaks with
 the dubiousness of a man, not the certainty of a god-
 dess ; she raises his expectation, by shewing she has an
 insight into futurity ; and to engage his belief she dis-
 covers in part the truth to Telemachus. Neither was
 it necessary or convenient for Telemachus to know the
 whole truth : for if he had known that Ulysses inha-
 bited a desert, detained by a goddess, he must of conse-
 quence have known of his return, (for he that could cer-
 tify the one, could certify the other,) and so had never
 gone in search of him ; and it would hence have hap-

The thoughts which rowl within my ravish'd breast,
 To me, no seer, th' inspiring gods suggest ; 260
 Nor skill'd, nor studious, with prophetic eye
 To judge the winged omens of the sky.
 Yet hear this certain speech, nor deem it vain ;
 Though adamantine bonds the chief restrain,
 The dire restraint his wisdom will defeat, 265
 And soon restore him to his regal seat.
 But, gen'rous youth ! sincere and free declare,
 Are you of manly growth, his royal heir ?
 For sure Ulysses in your look appears,
 The same his features, if the same his years. 270
 Such was that face, on which I dwelt with joy
 Ere Greece assembled stem'd the tydes to Troy ;
 But parting then for that detested shore,
 Our eyes unhappy ! never greeting more.
 To prove a genuine birth, the prince replies, 275
 On female truth assenting faith relies ;

pened, that Homer had been deprived of giving us those
 graces of poetry which arise from the voyage of Tele-
 machus. Eustathius.

ψ. 275. *To prove a genuine birth, etc.*] There is an
 appearance of something very shocking in this speech
 of Telemachus. It literally runs thus: *My mother*
assures me that I am the son of Ulysses, but I know it not.
 It seems to reflect upon his mother's chastity, as if he
 had a doubt of his own legitimacy. This seeming sim-
 plicity in Telemachus, says Eustathius, is the effect of
 a troubled spirit ; it is grief that makes him doubt if he
 can be the son of the great, the generous Ulysses ; it
 is no reflection upon Penelope, and consequently no

Thus manifest of right, I build my claim
 Sure-founded on a fair maternal fame,
 Ulysses' son : but happier he, whom fate
 Hath plac'd beneath the storms which tofs the great ! 280
 Happier the son, whose hoary fire is blest
 With humble affluence, and domestic rest !
 Happier than I, to future empire born,
 But doom'd a father's wretched fate to mourn !

fault in Telemachus : it is an undoubted truth, that the mother only knows the legitimacy of the child : thus Euripides,

Ἡ μὲν, γὰρ αὐτῆς οἶδεν ὄντα ὃδ' οἶται.

that is, the mother knows the child, the father only believes it.

Thus also Menander,

Ἀυτὸν γὰρ ὅδε οἶδε τῷ πότ' ἰγένετο
 Ἄλλ' ὑπονοῦμεν πάντες ἢ πιστεύσομεν.

that is, no man knows assuredly who begot him, we only guess it, and believe it.

Aristotle, in his Rhetoric, is also of this opinion ;

Ἀριστα περὶ τῶν τέκνων κρίνουσιν αἱ γυναῖκες.

What I have here said, is translated literally from Eustathius, and if it edifies the reader I am content. But the meaning of the passage is this, Mentès asks Telemachus if he be the son of Ulysses ; he replies, ' *So my mother assures me ; but nothing sure so wretched as I am could proceed from that great man.*'

But however this may be reconciled to truth, I believe few ladies would take it as a complement, if their sons should tell them there was some room to doubt of their legitimacy ; there may be abundance of truth in it, and yet very little decency.

To whom, with aspect mild, the guest divine. 285
Oh true descendant of a scepter'd line!

The gods, a glorious fate from anguish free
To chaste Penelope's increase decree.

But say, yon' jovial troop so gayly drest,
Is this a bridal or a friendly feast! 290

Or from their deed I rightlier may divine,
Unseemly flown with insolence and wine?

Unwelcome revellers, whose lawless joy
Pains the sage ear, and hurts the sober eye.

Magnificence of old, (the prince reply'd,) 295
Beneath our roof with virtue could reside;

Unblam'd abundance crown'd the royal board,
What time this dome rever'd her prudent lord;

Who now (so heav'n decrees) is doom'd to mourn,
Bitter constraint! erroneous and forlorn. 300

Better the chief, on Ilion's hostile plain
Had fall'n surrounded with his warlike train;

Or safe return'd, the race of glory past,
New to his friends embrace, had breath'd his last!

Then grateful Greece with streaming eyes would raise
Historic marbles, to record his praise; 306

His praise, eternal on the faithful stone,
Had with transmissive honour grac'd his son.

Now snatch'd by harpies to the dreary coast,
Sunk is the hero, and his glory lost: 310

v. 309. *Now snatch'd by harpies, etc.*] The meaning of this expression is, that Ulysses has not had the rites of sepulture. This among the ancients was esteemed the

Vanish'd at once ! unheard of, and unknown !
 And I his heir in misery alone.
 Nor for a dear, lost father only flow
 The filial tears, but woe succeeds to woe :
 To tempt the spouseless queen with am'rous wiles, 315
 Resort the nobles from the neighb'ring isles ;
 From Samos, circled with th' Ionian main,
 Dulichium, and Zacynthus' sylvan reign :
 Ev'n with presumptuous hope her bed t' ascend,
 The lords of Ithaca their right pretend. 320
 She seems attentive to their pleaded vows,
 Her heart detesting what her ear allows.

greatest of calamities, as it hindered the shades of the deceased from entering into the state of the happy.

¶ 315. *To tempt the spouseless queen — resort the nobles.* It is necessary to reconcile the conduct of the suitors to probability, since it has so great a share in the process of the *Odyssey*. It may seem incredible that Penelope, who is a queen, in whom the supreme power is lodged, should not dismiss such unwelcome intruders, especially since many of them were her own subjects : besides, it seems an extraordinary way of courtship in them, to ruin the person to whom they make their addresses.

To solve this objection we must consider the nature of the Grecian governments : the chief men of the land had great authority ; though the government was monarchical, it was not despotic ; Laertes was retired, and disabled with age ; Telemachus was yet in his minority ; and the fear of any violence either against her own person, or against her son, might deter Penelope from using any endeavours to remove men of such insolence, and such power. Dacier.

They, vain expectants of the bridal hour,
 My stores in riotous expence devour,
 In feast and dance the mirthful months employ, 325
 And meditate my doom, to crown their joy.

With tender pity touch'd, the goddess cry'd :
 Soon may kind heav'n a sure relief provide,
 Soon may your fire discharge the vengeance due,
 And all your wrongs the proud oppressors rue ! 330
 Oh ! in that portal should the chief appear,
 Each hand tremendous with a brazen spear,
 In radiant panoply his limbs incas'd ;
 (For so of old my father's court he grac'd,
 When social mirth unbent his serious soul, 335
 O'er the full banquet, and the sprightly bowl)
 He then from Ephyre, the fair domain
 Of Ilus sprung from Jason's royal strain,
 Measur'd a length of seas, a toilsome length, in vain.
 For voyaging to learn the direful art 340
 To taint with deadly drugs the barbed dart ;

ν. 341. *To taint with deadly drugs the barbed dart.*] It is necessary to explain this passage. It seems at first view, as if Ulysses had requested what a good man could not grant. Ilus, says Mentés, denied the poison, because he feared the anger of the gods ; and the poison itself is called by Homer *Ἀνδρῶνιον*, as if it were designed against mankind. Eustathius defends Ulysses variously : he intended, says he, to employ it against beasts only, that infested his country, or in hunting. He assigns another reason, and says that the poet is preparing the way to give an air of probability to the destruction of the suitors. He poisons his arrows, that every

Observant of the gods, and sternly just,
 Ilus refus'd t' impart the baneful trust:
 With friendlier zeal my father's soul was fir'd,
 The drugs he knew, and gave the boon desir'd. 345
 Appear'd he now with such heroic port,
 As then conspicuous at the Taphian court;
 Soon should yon' boasters cease their haughty strife,
 Or each atone his guilty love with life.
 But of his wish'd return the care resign; 350
 Be future vengeance to the Pow'rs divine.
 My sentence hear: with stern distaste avow'd,
 To their own districts drive the suitor-croud:
 When next the morning warms the purple east,
 Convoke the peerage, and the gods attest; 355
 The sorrows of your inmost soul relate;
 And form sure plans to save the sinking state.
 Should second love a pleasing flame inspire,
 And the chaste queen connubial rites require;

wound may be mortal; on this account the poison may be
 called *δυσπαρόν*; for it is certain in the wars of Troy,
 poisoned arrows were not in use, for many persons who
 were wounded recovered; so that of necessity they must
 be reserved for domestic occasions. From what has been
 said, we may collect the reason why Anchialus granted
 the poison to Ulysses, and Ilus denied it; Anchialus
 was the friend of Ulysses, and knew that he would not
 employ it to any ill purpose; but Ilus, who was a
 stranger to him, was afraid lest he should abuse it.
 Eustathius.

Dismiss'd with honour let her hence repair 360
 To great Icarius, whose paternal care
 Will guide her passion, and reward the choice
 With wealthy dow'r, and bridal gifts of price.
 Then let this dictate of my love prevail :
 Instant, to foreign realms prepare to sail, 365
 To learn your father's fortunes : fame may prove
 Or omen'd voice (the messenger of Jove)

ψ. 560. *Dismiss'd with honour let her hence repair.*] I will lay before the reader literally what Eustathius observe upon these words. There is a soloecism, says he, in these verses or words, that cannot be reduced to the rules of construction. It should be μήτηρ, not μητέρα ἀπ' ἱτω. How then comes the accusative case to be used instead of the nominative? Mentès, adds he, may be supposed to have intended to have said ἀποπέμψον, send thy mother away; but considering, in the midst of the sentence, that such advice was not suitable to be given to Telemachus, he checks himself and suppresses ἀποπέμψον; and no other word immediately occurring, that required an accusative case, he falls into a soloecism.

But perhaps this is more ingenious than true; though Mentès was in haste when he spoke it, Homer was not when he composed it. Might not an error creep into the original by the negligence of a transcriber, who might write μητέρα for μήτηρ? This is the more probable, because the one stands in the verse in every respect as well as the other.

What Eustathius adds is very absurd: he says that Telemachus must observe both the interpretations, either send thy mother away, or let the mother retire. So that the advice was double, send thy mother away if thou dost not love her; but if thou art unwilling to grieve her, let her recess be voluntary.

ψ. 367. *Omen'd voice—of Jove.*] There is a difficul-

Propitious to the search. Direct your toil
Through the wide ocean first to sandy Pyle,
Of Nestor, hoary sage, his doom demand ; 370
Thence speed your voyage to the Spartan strand,
For young Atrides to th' Achaian coast
Arriv'd the last of all the victor host.
If yet Ulysses views the light, forbear,
Till the fleet hours restore the circling year. 375
But if his soul hath wing'd the destin'd flight,
Inhabitant of deep disastrous night,
Homeward with pious speed repass the main,
To the pale shade funereal rites ordain,
Plant the fair column o'er the vacant grave, 380
A hero's honours let the hero have.
With decent grief the royal dead deplor'd,
For the chaste queen select an equal lord.
Then let revenge your daring mind employ,
By fraud or force the suitor-train destroy, 385
And starting into manhood, scorn the boy.

ty in this passage. In any case of enquiry, any words that were heard by accident were called by the Latins, *omens* ; by Homer, *the voice of Jupiter* ; and he stiles them so, because it is through his providence that those words come to our knowlege: *κλέος* signifies *fame* or *rumour* ; and the ancients referred all voices or sounds to Jupiter ; and stiled him *Zeûs πανομφάιος*. So that the *voice of Jove* implies any words that we hear by chance, from whence we can draw any thing that gives light to our concerns or enquiries. Dacier. Eûstathius.

Hast thou not heard how young Orestes fir'd
 With great revenge, immortal praise acquir'd?
 His virgin sword Ægysthus' veins imbru'd;
 The murd'rer fell, and blood atton'd for blood. 390
 O greatly blest'd with every blooming grace!
 With equal steps the paths of glory trace;
 Join to that royal youth's, your rival name,
 And shine eternal in the sphere of fame,—
 But my associates now my stay deplore, 395
 Impatient on the hoarse-resounding shore.
 Thou, heedful of advice, secure proceed;
 My praise the precept is, be thine the deed.

The counsel of my friend, the youth rejoin'd,
 Imprints conviction on my grateful mind. 400

ψ. 387. *Hast thou not heard, etc.*] It may seem that this example of Orestes does not come fully up to the purpose intended: there is a wide difference in the circumstances: Orestes slew an adulterer, and a single person with an adulteress. The designs of Telemachus are not against one, but many enemies; neither are they adulterers, nor have they slain the father of Telemachus, as is the case of Orestes: nor is Penelope an adulteress. The intent therefore of the goddess is only to shew what a glorious act it is to defend our parents: Orestes, says Mentès, is every where celebrated for honouring his father, and thou shalt obtain equal honour by defending thy mother.

The sense that *πατροφόνους* here bears is remarkable, it signifies not only a person who kills his own father, but who kills the father of any other person. Eustathius.

ψ. 413. — *With eagle-speed she cut the sky,*
Instant invisible —]

I pass over the several interpretations that have been

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So fathers speak (persuasive speech and mild !)

Their sage experience to the fav'rite child.

But since to part, for sweet refection due

The genial viands let my train renew :

And the rich pledge of plighted faith receive,

405

Worthy the heir of Ithaca to give.

Defer the promis'd boon, (the goddess cries,
Celestial azure brightning in her eyes)

And let me now regain the Reithrian port :

From Temese return'd your royal court

410

I shall revisit ; and that pledge receive,

And gifts, memorial of our friendship, leave.

Abrupt, with eagle-speed she cut the sky ;
Instant invisible to mortal eye.

Then first he recognis'd th' aetherial guest ;

415

Wonder and joy alternate fire his breast :

Heroic thoughts infus'd his heart dilate,

Revolving much his father's doubtful fate :

At length compos'd, he join'd the suitor-throng,

Hush'd in attention to the warbled song.

given to the word *ἀνὴρ* ; some say it implies she flew up the chimney, etc. In reality it signifies a species of an eagle ; but it may also signify the same as *ἀφανής*, invisible ; either of the latter senses are natural, or both together, like an eagle she disappeared. Eustathius.

Y. 420. *Hush'd in attention to the warbled song.* There may be two reasons why this is inserted ; either the suitors were pleased with the sweetness of the song, or the subject of it ; they sat attentive to hear the death of Ulysses, in the process of his story. This gives us a reason why immediately Penelope descended to stop

His tender theme the charming lyrist chose
 Minerva's anger, and the direful woes
 Which voyaging from Troy the victors bore,
 While storms vindictive intercept the shore.
 The shrilling airs the vaulted roof rebounds, 425
 Reflecting to the queen the silver sounds.

the song; she feared lest he might touch upon the story of Ulysses, and say that he died in his return. This would have reduced her to the utmost necessity, and she could not have deferred to marry. Phemius would have certainly found credit, for poets were believed to be inspired by the gods; they were looked upon as prophets, and to have something of divinity in them, as appears from Demodocus in the 8th book of the *Odyssey*. Besides there was a further necessity to put a stop to the song. If Phemius had declared him to be dead, Penelope could not have avoided marriage; if alive, the suitors might have defiled, or armed themselves against Ulysses, and then their deaths, one of the principal incidents of the poem, could not have followed; neither could Telemachus have gone in search of his father, if he had foreknown his death, or sudden return. It is therefore artful in the poet to cut the song short, he reserves the story of Ulysses for future narration, and brings all this about by a very probable method, by the interposition of Penelope, who requests that some other story may be chosen, a story that she can hear without sorrow.

It is very customary for women to be present at the entertainments of men; as appears from the conduct of Helen, Arete, Nauficaa, and Penelope, in divers parts of the *Odyssey*: she is here introduced with the greatest decency; she enters not the room, but stands with tears at the threshold; and even at that distance appears with her face shaded by a veil. Eustathius.

With grief renew'd the weeping fair descends ;
 Their sovereign's step a virgin train attends :
 A veil of richest texture wrought, she wears,
 And silent to the joyous hall repairs, 430
 There from the portal, with her mild command
 Thus gently checks the minstrel's tuneful hand.

Phemius ! let acts of gods and heroes old,
 What antient bards in hall and bow'r have told,
 Attemper'd to the lyre, your voice employ ; 335
 Such the pleas'd ear will drink with silent joy.
 But oh ! forbear that dear, disastrous name,
 To sorrow sacred, and secure of fame :
 My bleeding bosom sickens at the sound,
 And ev'ry piercing note inflicts a wound. 440

Why, dearest object of my duteous love,
 (Reply'd the prince) will you the bard reprove ?
 Oft, Jove's aetherial rays (resistless fire)
 The chanter's soul and raptur'd song inspire ;

℥. 443. *Oft Jove's aetherial rays, etc.*] Telemachus here reproves his mother for commanding Phemius to desist, or not to make Ulysses the subject of his song ; by saying, that it was not in the poet's own power to chuse his subject, which was frequently dictated and inspired by the gods. This is a particular instance of the opinion the antients held as to the immediate inspiration of their poets. The words in the original evidently bear this sense. *If the subject displease you, it is not the poet but Jupiter is to blame, who inspires men of invention, as he himself pleases.* And madam Dacier strangely mistakes this passage, in rendering it, *it is not the poet but Jupiter who is the cause of our misfortunes, for it*

Instinct divine ! nor blame severe his choice, 445
 Warbling the Grecian woes with harp and voice :
 For novel lays attract our ravish'd ears ;
 But old, the mind with inattention hears.
 Patient permit the sadly-pleasing strain ;
 Familiar now with grief, your tears refrain, 450
 And in the public woe forget your own ;
 You weep not for a perish'd lord, alone.
 What Greeks, now wand'ring in the Stygian gloom,
 With your Ulysses shar'd an equal doom !
 Your widow'd hours, apart, with female toil - 455
 And various labours of the loom, beguile ;
 There rule, from palace-cares remote and free,
 That care to man belongs, and rest to me.

is he who dispenses to wretched mortals good or evil as he pleases. At the same time she acknowledges the word *ἀλκιμαί*, which she here renders *laborious*, or *wretched*, to signify *persons of wit*, in the beginning of lib. 6. and *persons of skill and ability in their art*, in lib. 11.

v. 455. Your widow'd hours, apart, with female toil, etc.]

These verses are taken literally from the 6th book of the Iliad, except that *μῦθος* is inserted instead of *πόλεμος* ; Eustathius explains the passage thus : *Women are not forbidden intirely to speak, for women are talking animals, λαλητὸν ἔχουσιν, they have the faculty of talking, and indeed are rational creatures ; but they must not give too much liberty to that unruly member, in the company of men.* Sophocles advises well,

Γύναι, γυναιξὶ κόσμον ἢ σιγὴ φέρει,

O woman, silence is the ornament of thy sex. Madam Dacier, though she plunders almost every thing, has spared this observation.

Book I. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 75

Mature beyond his years the queen admires
His sage reply, and with her train retires. 460

Then swelling sorrows burst their former bounds,
With echoing grief afresh the dome resounds ;
Till Pallas piteous of her plaintive cries,
In slumber clos'd her silver-streaming eyes.

Mean-time rekindled at the royal charms, 465
Tumultuous love each beating bosom warms ;
Intemp'rate rage a wordy war began ;
But bold Telemachus assum'd the man.

Instant, he cry'd, your female discord end,
Ye deedless boasters ! and the song attend : 470
Obey that sweet compulsion, nor profane
With dissonance the smooth melodious strain.

Pacific now prolong the jovial feast ;
But when the dawn reveals the rosy east,
I, to the peers assembled, shall propose 475
The firm resolve I here in few disclose,

No longer live the cankers of my court ;
All to your several states with speed resort ;
Waste in wild riot what your land allows,
There play the early feast ; and late carouse. 480

But if, to honour lost, 'tis still decreed
For you my bowl shall flow, my flocks shall bleed,
Judge and revenge my right, impartial Jove !
By him and all th' immortal thrones above,
(A sacred oath) each proud oppressor slain 485
Shall with inglorious gore this marble stain.

Aw'd by the prince, thus haughty, bold, and young,
 Rage gnaw'd the lip, and wonder chain'd the tongue.
 Silence at length the gay Antinous broke,
 Constrain'd a smile, and thus ambiguous spoke. 490
 What god to your untutor'd youth affords
 This headlong torrent of amazing words ?

γ. 491. *The speech of Antinous.*] Antinous and Eurymachus are Ithacensians, and are called the chief of the suitors. It is therefore necessary to distinguish their characters; Antinous is violent, and determined against Ulysses; Eurymachus more gentle and subtile: Antinous derides, Eurymachus flatters.

This speech of Antinous is a concealed railery; he tells Telemachus, that Jove inspires his soul with wisdom, but means that his education has been such, that he had learned nothing from man; he wishes (out of a seemingly kind concern for him) that he may never reign in Ithaca, because the weight of a crown is a burthen; and concludes with mentioning his hereditary title to it, to insinuate that it is his by descent only, and not by merit.

Telemachus, in his answer, wisely dissembles the affront of Antinous, he takes it in the better sense, and seems to differ only in opinion about the regality. Think you, says he, that to be a king is to be miserable? To be a king, in my judgment, is to enjoy affluence and honour. He asserts his claim to the succession of his father, yet seems to decline it, to lay the suspicions of the suitors asleep, that they may not prevent the measures he takes to obtain it. Eustathius.

The speech of Eurymachus confirms the former observation, that this suitor is of a more soft and moderate behaviour than Antinous: he cloaths ill designs with a seeming humanity, and appears a friend, while he carries on the part of an enemy: Telemachus had

May Jove delay thy reign, and cumber late
So bright a genius with the toils of state !

Those toils (Telemachus serene replies) 495

Have charms, with all their weight, to allure the wife.

Fast by the throne obsequious fame resides,
And wealth incessant rolls her golden tides.

Nor let Antinous rage, if strong desire
Of wealth and fame a youthful bosom fire ; 500

Elect by Jove his delegate of sway,

With joyous pride the summons I'd obey.

Whene'er Ulysses roams the realm of night,
Should factious pow'r dispute my lineal right,
Some other Greeks, a fairer claim may plead ; 505

To your pretence their title would precede.

At least, the sceptre lost, I still should reign
Sole o'er my vassals, and domestic train.

To this Eurymachus. To heav'n alone
Refer the choice to fill the vacant throne. 510

Your patrimonial stores in peace possess ;

Undoubted all your filial claim confess :

said, that if it was the will of Jupiter, he would ascend the throne of Ithaca : Eurymachus answers, that this was as the gods should determine ; an insinuation that they regarded not his claim from his father. Telemachus said he would maintain himself in the possession of his present inheritance : Eurymachus wishes that no one may arrive to dispossess him ; the latent meaning of which is, ' we of your own country are sufficient for ' that design.' If these observations of Eustathius be true, Eurymachus was not a less enemy than Antinous, but a better dissembler.

Your private right should impious pow'r invade,
 The peers of Ithaca would arm in aid.
 But say, that stranger-guest who late withdrew, 515
 What and from whence? his name and lineage shew.

His grave demeanour, and majestic grace
 Speak him descended of no vulgar race:
 Did he some loan of antient right require,
 Or came fore-runner of your scepter'd fire? 520

Oh son of Polybus! the prince replies,
 No more my fire will glad those longing eyes:
 The queen's fond hope inventive rumour cheers,
 Or vain diviners' dreams divert her fears.
 That stranger-guest the Taphian realm obeys, 525
 A realm defended with incircling seas.

Mentes, an ever-honour'd name, of old
 High in Ulysses' social list inroll'd.

Thus he, though conscious of th' aetherial guest,
 Answer'd evasive of the sly request. 530

Mean time the lyre rejoins the sprightly lay;
 Love-dittied airs, and dance conclude the day.
 But when the star of Eve, with golden light
 Adorn'd the matron-brow of fable night;
 The mirthful train dispersing quit the court, 535
 And to their several domes to rest resort.

A tow'ring structure to the palace join'd;
 To this his steps the thoughtful prince inclin'd;
 In his pavilion there to sleep repairs;
 The lighted torch the sage Euryclea bears. 540

γ. 540. *The sage Euryclea.*] Euryclea was a very

(Daughter of Ops, the just Pisenor's son,
 For twenty beeves by great Laertes won ;
 In rosy prime with charms attractive grac'd,
 Honour'd by him, a gentle lord and chaste,
 With dear esteem : too wise, with jealous strife 545
 To taint the joys of sweet, connubial life.
 Sole with Telemachus her service ends,
 A child she nurs'd him, and a man attends.)

aged person ; she was bought by Laertes to nurse Ulysses ; and in her old age attends Telemachus : she cost Laertes twenty oxen ; that is, a certain quantity of money (*ὕλης μεταλλικῆς*) which would buy twenty oxen : or perhaps the form of an ox was stamped upon the metal, and from thence had its appellation.

The simplicity of these heroic times is remarkable ; an old woman is the only attendant upon the son of a king : she lights him to his apartment, takes care of his cloths, and hangs them up at the side of his bed. Greatness then consisted not in shew, but in the mind : this conduct proceeded not from the meanness of poverty, but from the simplicity of manners. Eustathius.

Having now gone through the first book, I shall only observe to the reader, that the whole of it does not take up the compass of an intire day : when Minerva appears to Telemachus the suitors were preparing to sit down to the banquet at noon ; and the business of the first book concludes with the day. It is true, that the gods hold a debate before the descent of Minerva, and some small time must be allowed for that transaction. It is remarkable, that there is not one simile in this book, except we allow those three words to be one, *ἔρως δ' ὡς ἀνόπαια* ; the same observation is true of the first book of the Iliad. See the notes on that place.

Whilst to his couch himself the prince address,
 The dutèous dame receiv'd the purple vest : 550
 The purple vest with decent care dispos'd,
 The silver ring she pull'd, the door reclos'd,
 The bolt obedient to the silken cord,
 To the strong staple's inmost depth restor'd,
 Secur'd the valves. There wrapt in silent shade, 555
 Pensive, the rules the goddeſs gave, he weigh'd ;
 Stretch'd on the downy fleece, no rest he knows,
 And in his raptur'd soul the vision glows.

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T H E A R G U M E N T .

The council of Ithaca.

Telemachus, in the assembly of the lords of Ithaca, complains of the injustice done him by the suitors, and insists upon their departure from his palace; appealing to the princes, and exciting the people to declare against them. The suitors endeavour to justify their stay, at least till he shall send the queen to the court of Icarius her father; which he refuses. There appears a prodigy of two eagles in the sky, which an augur expounds to the ruin of the suitors. Telemachus then demands a vessel to carry him to Pylos and Sparta, there to enquire of his father's fortunes. Pallas in the shape of Mentor (an antient friend of Ulysses) helps him to a ship, assists him in preparing necessaries for the voyage, and imbarks with him that night; which concludes the second day from the opening of the poem.

The SCENE continues in the palace of Ulysses in Ithaca.

NOW red'ning from the dawn, the morning ray
Glow'd in the front of heav'n, and gave the day.
The youthful hero, with returning light,
Rose anxious from th' inquietudes of night.

This book opens with the first appearance of Telemachus upon the stage of action. And Bossu observes

A royal robe he wore with graceful pride, 5
 A two-edg'd faulchion threaten'd by his side,
 Embroider'd sandals glitter'd as he trod,
 And forth he mov'd, majestic as a god.
 Then by his heralds, restless of delay,
 To council calls the peers : the peers obey. 10
 Soon as in solemn form th' assembly fate,
 From his high dome himself descends in state.
 Bright in his hand a pond'rous javelin shin'd ;
 Two dogs, a faithful guard, attend behind ;

the great judgment of the poet, in beginning with the transactions of Ithaca in the absence of Ulysses : by this method he sets the conduct of Telemachus, Penelope, and the suitors, in a strong point of light ; they all have a large share in the story of the poem, and consequently ought to have distinguishing characters. It is as necessary in epic poetry, as it is on the theatre, to let us immediately into the character of every person whom the poet introduces : this adds perspicuity to the story, and we immediately grow acquainted with each personage, and interest ourselves in the good or ill fortune that attends them through the whole relation.

Telemachus is now about twenty years of age : in the eleventh book, the poet tells us, he was an infant in the arms of his mother when Ulysses sailed to Troy ; that hero was absent near twenty years, and from hence we may gather the exact age of Telemachus. He is every where described as a person of piety to the gods, of duty to his parents, and as a lover of his country : he is prudent, temperate, and valiant : and the poet well sets off the importance of this young hero, by giving him the goddesses of war and wisdom for his constant attendant.

ψ. 13. — *In his hand a pond'rous javelin shin'd.*]

Pallas with grace divine his form improves, 15
And gazing crouds admire him as he moves.

The poet describes Telemachus as if he were marching against an enemy, or going to a council of war, rather than to an assembly of peers in his own country: two reasons are assigned for this conduct; either this was the common usage of princes in those times, or Telemachus might look upon the suitors as enemies, and consequently go to council in arms as against enemies. Eustathius.

ψ. 14. *Two dogs, a faithful friend, attend behind.*] This passage has not escaped the raillery of the critics; they look upon it as a mean description of a hero and a prince, to give him a brace of dogs only for his guards and attendants: but such was the simplicity of antient princes, that except in war they had rarely any attendants or equipage. And we may be confident Homer copies after the custom of the time, unless we can be so absurd as to suppose, he would feign low circumstances unnecessarily, through a want of judgment.

Virgil judged otherwise, and thought this circumstance worthy of his imitation.

*Quin etiam gemini custodes limine ab alto
Procedunt, gressumque canes comitantur Herilem.*

Achilles is described in the Iliad with the same attendants.

— *nine large dogs domestic at his board.* B. 23.

Poetry, observes Dacier, is like painting, which draws the greatest beauties from the simplest customs: and even in history, we receive a sensible pleasure from the least circumstance that denotes the customs of antient times. It may be added, that the poet, as well as the painter, is obliged to follow the customs of the age of which he writes, or paints: a modern dress would ill become Achilles or Ulysses, such a conduct would be

His father's throne he fill'd : while distant stood
The hoary peers, and aged wisdom bow'd.

'Twas silence all, at last Ægyptius spoke ;
Ægyptius, by his age and sorrows broke : 20

A length of days his soul with prudence crown'd,
A length of days had bent him to the ground.

His eldest * hope in arms to Ilion came,

By great Ulysses taught the path to fame ;

But, hapless youth, the hideous Cyclops tore 25

His quiv'ring limbs, and quaff'd his spouting gore.

Three sons remain'd : to climb with haughty fires

The royal bed, Eurynomus aspires ;

The rest with duteous love his griefs assuage,

And ease the fire of half the cares of age. 30

Yet still his Antiphus he loves, he mourns,

And as he stood, he spoke and wept by turns.

Since great Ulysses fought the Phrygian plains,
Within these walls inglorious silence reigns.

* Antiphus.

condemned as an absurdity in painting, and ought to
be so in poetry.

ψ. 31. *Yet still his Antiphus he loves, he mourns.*] Homer, says Eustathius, inserts these particularities concerning the family of Ægyptius, to give an air of truth to his story. It does not appear that Ægyptius knew the certainty of the death of Antiphus : (for it is the poet who relates it, and not the father ;) whence, as Dacier observes, should he learn it ? he only laments him, according to the prevailing opinion that all the companions of Ulysses were lost with Ulysses.

ψ. 33. *Since great Ulysses, etc.*] We are here told, that there never had been any council convened in Ithaca,

Book II. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 85

Say then, ye peers ! by whose commands we meet ?
 Why here once more in solemn council sit ? 36
 Ye young, ye old, the weighty cause disclose :
 Arrives some message of invading foes ?
 Or say, does high necessity of state
 Inspire some patriot, and demand debate ! 40
 The present synod speaks its author wise ;
 Assist him, Jove ! thou regent of the skies !

since the departure of Ulysses. The general design and moral of the *Odyssey*, is to inform us of the mischievous effects which the absence of a king and father of a family produces : we deprive, as Bossu observes, the poem of its very soul, and spoil the fable, if we retrench from it the disorders which the suitors create in the absence of Ulysses, both in his family and dominions. Nothing can give us a greater image of those disorders, than what is here related : what must a kingdom suffer in twenty years, without a ruler, without a council to make laws or punish enormities ? Such is the condition of Ithaca : Laertes is superannuated ; Penelope oppressed by the violence of the suitors ; and Telemachus to this time, in his minority.

It is very artful in the poet to open the assembly by Ægyptius : Telemachus was the person who convened it ; and being the greatest personage present, it might be expected that he should open the design of it : but to give Telemachus courage, who was young and inexperienced, Ægyptius first rises, and by praising the person who had summoned them, of whom he seems ignorant, gives Telemachus to understand he has friends among the assembly : this he could no other way so safely have done, considering the power of the suitors. By this means, Telemachus is encouraged to speak boldly, and arraign the disorders of the suitors with the utmost freedom.

He spoke. Telemachus, with transport glows,
Embrac'd the omen, and majestic rose :
(His royal hand th' imperial sceptre sway'd) 45
Then thus, addressing to Ægyptius, said.

Rev'rend old man ! lo here confest he stands
By whom ye meet ; my grief your care demands.
No story I unfold of public woes,
Nor bear advices of impending foes : 50
Peace the blest land, and joys incessant crown ;
Of all this happy realm, I grieve alone.
For my lost fire continual sorrows spring,
The great, the good ; your father, and your king.
Yet more ; our house from its foundation bows, 55
Our foes are pow'rful, and your sons the foes :

ψ. 54. *Your father, and your king.*] Telemachus here sets the character of Ulysses, as a king, in the most agreeable point of light : he ruled his people with the same mildness as a father rules his children. This must needs have a very happy effect upon the audience ; not only as it shews Ulysses to have been a good governor ; but as it recalls the memory of the happiness they received from that mild government, and obliquely condemns them of ingratitude who had forgot it. By this method also the poet interests us deeply in the sufferings of Ulysses ; we cannot see a good man and good king in distress, without the most tender emotions.

ψ. 55. *Yet more—our house, etc.*] What Telemachus here says has give offence to the critics ; they think it indecent for a son to say, that he bears with more regret the disorder of his family than the loss of his father ; yet this objection will vanish, if we weigh Penelope, Telemachus, and his whole posterity, against the single person of Ulysses.

Hither, unwelcome to the queen they come ;
 Why seek they not the rich Icarian dome ?
 If she must wed, from other hands require
 The dowry ; is Telemachus her fire ? 60
 Yet through my court the noise of revel rings,
 And wastes the wise frugality of kings.
 Scarce all my herds their luxury suffice ;
 Scarce all my wine their midnight hours supplies.

But what chiefly takes away this objection is, that Telemachus was still in hopes of his father's return : for ἀπώλεια does not imply necessarily his death, but absence : and then both with justice and decency, Telemachus may say that he grieves more for the destruction of his family, than for the absence of Ulysses.

γ. 63. *Scarce all my herds their luxury suffice.*] This passage is ridiculed by the critics ; they set it in a wrong light, and then grow very pleasant upon it : Telemachus makes a sad outcry because the suitors eat his sheep, his beeves and fatted goats ; and at last falls into tears. The truth is, the riches of kings and princes, in those early ages, consisted chiefly in flocks and cattle ; thus Æneas and Paris are described as tending their flocks, etc. and Abraham in the scriptures, as abounding in this kind of wealth.

These critics would form a different idea of the state and condition of Telemachus, if they considered that he had been capable to maintain no fewer than an hundred and eight persons in a manner very expensive for many years ; for so many, with their attendants, were the suitors, as appears from the 16th book ; and at the same time he kept up the dignity of his own court, and lived with great hospitality.

But it is a sufficient answer to the objections against this passage, to observe, that it is not the expence, but

Safe in my youth, in riot still they grow, 65
 Nor in the helpless orphan dread a foe.
 But come it will, the time when manhood grants
 More pow'rful advocates than vain complaints.
 Approach that hour! unsufferable wrong
 Cries to the gods, and vengeance sleeps too long. 70
 Rise then, ye peers! with virtuous anger rise!
 Your fame revere, but most th'avenging skies.
 By all the deathless pow'rs that reign above,
 By righteous Themis and by thund'ring Jove,
 (Themis, who gives to councils, or denies 75
 Success; and humbles, or confirms the wife)

manner of it, that Telemachus laments: this he expressly declares by the word *μαρτίδας*; and surely a sober man may complain against luxury, without being arraigned of meanness; and against profusion, without being condemned for parsimony.

ψ. 75. *Themis, who gives to councils, or denies success.* Eustathius observes, that there was a custom to carry the statue of Themis to the assemblies in former ages, and carry it back again when those assemblies were dissolved; and thus Themis may be said to form, and dissolve an assembly. Dacier dislikes this assertion, as having no foundation in antiquity; she thinks that the assertion of Telemachus is general, that he intimates it is justice alone that establishes the councils of mankind, and that injustice confounds and brings the wicked designs of men to confusion.

I have followed this interpretation, not only as it suits best with the usual morality of Homer, but also as Jupiter is mentioned with Themis; and no such custom is pretended concerning his statue. He is expressly stiled by the ancients Ζεύς ἀγοραῖος. In Sicily there was an

Rise in my aid ! suffice the tears that flow
 For my lost fire, nor add new woe to woe.
 If e'er he bore the sword to strengthen ill,
 Or having pow'r to wrong, betray'd the will, 80
 On me, on me your kindled wrath assuage,
 And bid the voice of lawless riot rage.
 If ruin to our royal race ye doom,
 Be you the spoilers, and our wealth consume.
 Then might we hope redress from juster laws, 85
 And raise all Ithaca to aid our cause :
 But while your sons commit th' unpunish'd wrong,
 You make the arm of violence too strong.

While thus he spoke, with rage and grief he frown'd,
 And dash'd th' imperial sceptre to the ground. 90
 The big round tear hung trembling in his eye :
 The synod griev'd, and gave a pitying sigh,

altar of Ζεύς ἀγοραῖος, or of Jupiter who presides over councils. Eustathius from Herodotus.

ψ. 84. *Be you the spoilers, and our wealth consume.*]
 To understand this passage, we must remember, as Eustathius remarks, that Telemachus is pleading his cause before the Ithacensians ; then he constitutes the judges of his cause : he therefore prevents an answer which they might make, viz. *We are not the men that are guilty of these outrages* ; Telemachus rejoins, ' It were better for me to suffer from your hands ; for by your quiescence you make my affairs desperate : ' an intimation that they should rise in his defence.

ψ. 91. *The big round tear hung trembling in his eye.*]
 This passage is not one of those, where the poet can be blamed for the causing a hero to weep. If we consider the youth of Telemachus, together with the ten-

Then silent sat——at length Antinous burns
With haughty rage, and sternly thus returns.

O insolence of youth! whose tongue affords 95
Such railing eloquence, and war of words.
Studious thy country's worthies to defame,
Thy erring voice displays thy mother's shame.
Elusive of the bridal day, she gives
Fond hopes to all, and all with hopes deceives. 100

dernefs agreeable to that time of life; the subjects that demand his concern; the apprehension of the loss of a father; and the desolate state of his mother and kingdom: all these make his readiness to burst into tears an argument, not of any want of spirit in him, but of true sense, and goodness of nature; and is a great propriety, which shews the right judgment of the poet.

§. 95. *Oh insolence of youth, etc.*] We find Antinous always setting himself in the strongest opposition to Telemachus; and therefore, he is the first that falls by the spear of Ulysses; the poet observes justice, and as Antinous is the first in guilt, he is the first in punishment. What Antinous says in this speech concerning the treachery of the female servant of Penelope, prepares the way for the punishment Ulysses inflicts on some of the maids in the conclusion of the poem: this is an act of poetical justice; and it is as necessary in epic as in tragic poetry, to reward the just, and punish the guilty. Eustathius.

§. 99. *Elusive of the bridal day, she gives
Fond hopes to all, and all with hopes deceives.*]

It will be necessary to vindicate the character of Penelope, the heroine of the poem, from the aspersions of Antinous. It must be confessed that she has a very hard game to play, she neither dares consent, nor deny; if

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Did not the sun, through heav'ns wide azure roll'd,
 For three long years the royal fraud behold ?
 While she, laborious in delusion, spread
 The spacious loom, and mix'd the various thread :
 Where as to life the wond'rous figures rise, 105
 Thus spoke th' inventive queen, with artful sighs.

' Though cold in death Ulysses breathes no more,
 ' Cease yet a while to urge the bridal hour ;

she consents, she injures Ulysses, whom she still expects to return ; if she denies, she indangers the throne, and the life of Telemachus, from the violence of the suitors ; so that no other method is left but to elude their addresses.

I must not conceal what Eustathius has mentioned from some authors, as Lycophron, etc. who say that Penelope was *καταπίδα*, in plain English, *an harlot* ; and he quotes Herodotus, as affirming that she had a son, named Pan, by Hermes ; but the bishop declares it is all a scandal ; and every body must conclude the same, from her conduct, as described in Homer.

To vindicate her in this place, we must consider who it is that speaks : Antinous, an unsuccessful lover : and what he blames as a crime, is really her glory ; he blames her because she does not comply with their desires ; and it had been an act of guilt to have complied. He himself sufficiently vindicates her in the conclusion of his speech, where he extols her above all the race of womankind : so that the seeming inconsistency of Penelope must be imputed to the necessity of her affairs : she is artful, but not criminal.

The original says, she deceived the suitors by her messages ; a plain intimation, that she used no extraordinary familiarities with her admirers ; and through the whole course of the poem she seldom appears in their assemblies.

' Cease, till to great Laertes I bequeath
 ' A task of grief, his ornaments of death : 110
 ' Lest when the fates his royal ashes claim,
 ' The Grecian matrons taint my spotless fame ;
 ' When he, whom living mighty realms obey'd,
 ' Shall want in death a shroud to grace his shade.'

Thus she: at once the gen'rous train complies, 115
 Nor fraud mistrusts in virtue's fair disguise.
 The work she ply'd; but studious of delay,
 By night revers'd the labours of the day.
 While thrice the sun his annual journey made,
 The conscious lamp the midnight fraud survey'd; 120
 Unhear'd, unseen, three years her arts prevail;
 The fourth, her maid unfolds th' amazing tale.
 We saw, as unperceiv'd we took our stand,
 The backward labours of her faithless hand.

ψ. 109. *Cease, till to great Laertes I bequeath
 A task of grief, his ornaments of death.]*

It was an antient custom to dedicate the finest pieces of weaving and embroidery, to honour the funerals of the dead: and these were usually wrought by the nearest relations in their life-time. Thus in the 22d Iliad, Andromache laments, that the body of Hector must be exposed to the air, without those ornaments.

----- ἀτὰρ τοι ἔμματα' ἐνὶ μεγάροισι κέονταί,
 Δειλά τε καὶ χαρίεντα, τετυγμένα χερσὶ γυναικῶν.

And the mother of Euryalus in Virgil, to her son.

————— *Nec te tua funera mater
 Produxi, pressive oculos, aut vulnera lavi,
 Veste tegens, tibi quam noctes festina diesque
 Urgebam, et tela curas solabar aniles.*

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Book II. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 93

Then urg'd, she perfects her illustrious toils ; 125

A wond'rous monument of female wiles !

But you, oh peers ! and thou, oh prince ! give ear :
(I speak aloud, that every Greek may hear)

Dismiss the queen ; and if her fire approves,

Let him espouse her to the peer she loves : 130

Bid instant to prepare the bridal train,

Nor let a race of princes wait in vain.

Though with a grace divine her soul is blest,

And all Minerva breathes within her breast,

In wond'rous arts than woman more renown'd, 135

And more than woman with deep wisdom crown'd ;

Though Tyro nor Mycene match her name,

Nor great Alcmena, the proud boasts of fame,

Yet thus by heav'n adorn'd, by heav'n's decree

She shines with fatal excellence, to thee : 140

With thee, the bowl we drain, indulge the feast,

Till righteous heav'n reclaim her stubborn breast.

What though from pole to pole resounds her name !

The son's destruction waits the mother's fame :

For till she leaves thy court, it is decreed, 145

Thy bowl to empty, and thy flock to bleed.

ψ. 140. *She shines with fatal excellence, to thee.*] Eustathius observes, that Antinous, in the opening of his speech, throws the fault upon Penelope, to engage the favour of the multitude : but being conscious that he had said things which Penelope would resent, he extols her in the conclusion of it. He ascribes an obstinacy of virtue to her, and by this double conduct endeavours to make both Penelope and the multitude his friends.

While yet he speaks, Telemachus replies,
Ev'n nature starts, and what ye ask denies.

ψ. 147. *Telemachus's reply.*] Telemachus every where speaks with an openness and bravery of spirit; this speech is a testimony of it, as well as his former; he answers chiefly to the dismissal of Penelope, says it would be an offence against heaven and earth; and concludes with a vehemence of expression, and tells Antinous that such a word, μῦθον, shall never fall from his tongue.

The critics have found fault with one part of the speech, as betraying a spirit of avarice and meanness in Telemachus:

*How to Icarius, in the bridal hour,
Shall I, by waste undone, refund the dow'r?*

They think it unworthy of Telemachus to make the dower of Penelope an argument against her dismissal, and consequently ascribe his detention of her, not to duty, but to covetousness. To take away this objection, they point the verses in a different manner, and place a stop after ἀποτίμειν, and then the sense runs thus: 'I cannot consent to dismiss her who bore me, and nursed me in my infancy, while her husband is absent, or perhaps dead; besides, hard would be the punishment I should suffer, if I should voluntarily send away Penelope to Icarius.'

Dacier dislikes this solution, and appeals to the customs of those ages, to justify her opinion: if a son forced away his mother from his house, he was obliged to restore her dower, and all she brought in marriage to her husband: but if she retired voluntarily to engage in a second marriage, the dower remained with the son as lawful heir. This opinion of Dacier may be confirmed from Demosthenes in his orations, καὶ μετὰ ταῦτα ἀνδρὸς αὐτῆς τελευτήσαντος, ἀπολιπῶσα τὸν οἶκον, καὶ κομισαμένη τὴν προῖκα. *Afterwards upon the de-*

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Thus, shall I thus repay a mother's cares,
 Who gave me life, and nurs'd my infant years ? 150
 While sad on foreign shores Ulysses treads,
 Or glides a ghost with unapparent shades,
 How to Icarius in the bridal hour
 Shall I, by waste undone, refund the dow'r ?
 How from my father should I vengeance dread ? 155
 How would my mother curse my hated head ?

cease of her husband, leaving his family, and receiving back her portion, etc. The same author adds, that the reason why the suitors are so urgent to send away Penelope, is that she may chuse to marry some one of them, rather than return to Icarius ; so that Telemachus only takes hold of their argument for her dismissal, in order to detain her. They addressed Penelope more for the sake of her riches than her beauty, (for she must be about forty years old) and he tells them, that if he sends her away against her consent, he must restore those riches, which they covet more than the person of Penelope. This I confess is very refined ; and perhaps it may be sufficient to take off the objection of covetousness in Telemachus, to understand no more than what the words at the first view seem to imply, viz. an abhorrence of their riots, described by Telemachus to have risen to such a degree as to have almost ruined his kingdom, and made their demands impossible. I see nothing unnatural or mean in this interpretation, especially if we remember, that the prodigious disorders of his family enter into the essence of the poem. The greater the disorders are, the greater are the sufferings of Ulysses.

ψ. 155. *How from my father should I vengeance dread ?*
 There is an ambiguity in the word *father* ; it may either signify Icarius or Ulysses, as Eustathius observes : but I think the context determines the person to be Ulysses ;

And while in wrath to vengeful fiends she cries,
 How from her hell would vengeful fiends arise?
 Abhorr'd by all, accurs'd my name would grow,
 The earth's disgrace, and humankind my foe. 160
 If this displease, why urge ye here your stay?
 Haste from the court, ye spoilers, haste away:

for Telemachus believes him to be yet living, and consequently might fear his vengeance, if he offered any indignity to Penelope.

Y. 157. *And while in wrath to vengeful fiends she cries.
 How from their hell would vengeful fiends arise?]*

In the ninth Iliad we are told that the father of Phoenix imprecated the furies against his son,

*My sire with curses loads my hated head,
 And cries, 'Ye furies! barren be his bed.
 Infernal Jove, the vengeful fiends below,
 And ruthless Proserpine, confirm'd his vow.*

In the same book the furies hear the curses of Althea upon her son,

*She beat the ground, and call'd the pow'rs beneath,
 On her own son to wreak her brother's death.
 Hell heard her curses from the realms profound,
 And the fell fiends who walk the nightly round.*

These passages shew the opinion the ancients had of the honour due from children to parents, to be such, that they believed there were furies particularly commissioned to punish those who failed in that respect, and to fulfil the imprecations made against them by their offended parents. There is a greatness in this idea, and it must have had an effect upon the obedience of the youth. We see Telemachus is full of the sense of it. Dacier.

Waste in wild riot what your land allows,
 There ply the early feast, and late carouse.
 But if, to honour lost, 'tis still decreed 165
 For you my bowl shall flow, my flocks shall bleed;
 Judge and assert my right, impartial Jove!
 By him, and all th' immortal host above,
 (A sacred oath) if heav'n the pow'r supply,
 Vengeance I vow, and for your wrongs ye die. 170
 With that, two eagles from a mountain's height
 By Jove's command direct their rapid flight;

ψ. 171. etc. *The prodigy of the two eagles.*] This prodigy is usher'd in very magnificently, and the verses are lofty and sonorous. The eagles are Ulysses and Telemachus: *By Jove's command they fly from a mountain's height*: this denotes that the two heroes are inspired by Jupiter, and come from the country to the destruction of the suitors: the eagles fly *with wing to wing conjoin'd*; this shews, that they act in concert, and unity of councils: at first they *float upon the wind*; this implies the calmness and secrecy of the approach of those heroes: at last they *clang their wings, and hovering beat the skies*; this shews the violence of the assault: *With ardent eyes the rival train they threat*: this, as the poet himself interprets it, denotes the approaching fate of the suitors. *Then sailing over the domes and towers they fly, Full toward the east*; this signifies that the suitors alone are not doomed to destruction, but that the men of Ithaca are involved in danger, as Halitherses interprets it.

*Nor to the great alone is death decreed;
 We, and our guilty Ithaca must bleed.*

See here the natural explication of this prodigy, which is very ingenious! Eustathius, *verbatim*.

Swift they descend, with wing to wing conjoin'd,
 Stretch their broad plumes, and float upon the wind.
 Above th' assembled peers they wheel on high, 175
 And clang their wings, and hovering beat the sky;
 With ardent eyes the rival train they threat,
 And shrieking loud, denounce approaching fate.
 They cuff, they tear; their cheeks and necks they rend,
 And from their plumes huge drops of blood descend:
 Then sailing o'er the domes and tow'rs they fly, 181
 Full tow'rd the east, and mount into the sky.

The wond'ring rivals gaze with cares oppress,
 And chilling horrors freeze in every breast.
 Till big with knowledge of approaching woes 185
 The prince of augurs, Halitherses, rose:
 Prescient he view'd th' aerial tracts, and drew
 A sure presage from ev'ry wing that flew.

Ye sons, he cry'd, of Ithaca, give ear,
 Hear all! but chiefly you, oh rivals! hear. 190
 Destruction sure o'er all your heads impends;
 Ulysses comes, and death his steps attends.
 Nor to the great alone is death decreed;
 We, and our guilty Ithaca must bleed.
 Why cease we then the wrath of heav'n to stay? 195
 Be humbled all, and lead, ye great! the way.
 For lo! my words no fancy'd woes relate:
 I speak from science, and the voice is fate.

When great Ulysses sought the Phrygian shores
 To shake with war proud Ilion's lofty tow'rs, 200

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Deeds then undone my faithful tongue foretold ;
 Heav'n seal'd my words, and you those deeds behold.
 I see (I cry'd) his woes, a countless train ;
 I see his friends o'erwhelm'd beneath the main :
 How twice ten years from shore to shore he roams ;
 Now twice ten years are past, and now he comes ! 206
 To whom Eurymachus — Fly dotard, fly !
 With thy wise dreams, and fables of the sky.

ψ. 203. *I see (I cry'd) his woes —*

I see his friends o'erwhelm'd, etc.]

In three lines, observes Eustathius, the poet gives us the whole *Odyssey* in miniature : and it is wonderful to think, that so plain a subject should produce such variety in the process of it. Aristotle observes the simplicity of Homer's platform ; which is no more than this : a prince is absent from his country ; Neptune destroys his companions ; in his absence his family is disordered by many princes that address his wife, and plot against the life of his only son, but at last, after many storms, he returns, punishes the suitors, and re-establishes his affairs : this is all that is essential to the poem, the rest of it is made up of episodes. And yet with what miracles of poetry (*speciosa miracula*, as Horace styles them,) has he furnished out his poem !

ψ. 207. *The speech of Eurymachus.*] It has been observed, that Homer is the father of oratory as well as poetry ; and it must be confessed, that there is not any one branch of it that is not to be found in his poetry. The invective, persuasive, ironical, etc. may all be gathered from it. Nothing can be better adapted to the purpose than this speech of Eurymachus : he is to decry the credit of the predictions of Halitherses : he derides, he threatens, and describes him as a venal prophet. He is speaking to the multitude, and endeavours

Go prophesy at home ; thy sons advise :
 Here thou art sage in vain—I better read the skies.
 Unnumber'd birds glide through the aerial way, 210
 Vagrants of air, and unforeboding stray.
 Cold in the tomb, or in the deeps below
 Ulysses lies : oh wert thou laid as low !
 Then would that busy head no broils suggest, 215
 Nor fire to rage Telemachus's breast.
 From him some bribe thy venal tongue requires,
 And int'rest, not the god, thy voice inspires.
 His guide-less youth, if thy experienc'd age
 Misset fallacious into idle rage, 220
 Vengeance deserv'd thy malice shall repress,
 And but augment the wrongs thou would'st redress.
 Telemachus may bid the queen repair
 To great Icarius, whose paternal care
 Will guide her passion, and reward her choice, 225
 With wealthy dow'r, and bridal gifts of price.
 Till she retires, determin'd we remain,
 And both the prince and augur threat in vain :
 His pride of words, and thy wild dream of fate,
 Move not the brave, or only move their hate. 230
 Threat on, oh prince ! elude the bridal day,
 Threat on, till all thy stores in waste decay.
 True, Greece affords a train of lovely dames,
 In wealth and beauty worthy of our flames :

to bring Halitherfes into contempt, and in order to it
 he uses him contemptuously.

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But never from this nobler suit we cease; 235
For wealth and beauty less than virtue please.

To whom the youth. Since then in vain I tell
My num'rous woes, in silence let them dwell.
But heav'n, and all the Greeks, have heard my wrongs:
To heav'n, and all the Greeks, redress belongs. 240
Yet this I ask (nor be it ask'd in vain)
A bark to waft me o'er the rolling main;
The realms of Pyle and Sparta to explore,
And seek my royal sire from shore to shore :
If, or to fame his doubtful fate be known, 245
Or to be learn'd from Oracles alone ?
If yet he lives, with patience I forbear
Till the fleet hours restore the circling year ;

ψ. 239. — *all the Greeks have heard my wrongs.*]
It is necessary for the reader to carry in his mind, that
this assembly consists not only of the peers, but of the
people of Ithaca : for to the people Telemachus here
appeals.

It is evident, that the place of the assembly was at
least open to the air in the upper parts : for otherways
how should the eagles be visible to the suitors ? and so
very plainly as to be discovered to threat them with
their eyes ? There was, no doubt, a place set apart
for council, usually in the market : for Telemachus is
said to seat himself in his father's throne, in the begin-
ning of this book : but Ulysses had been absent twenty
years ; and therefore it is evident, that his throne had
stood in the same place for the space of twenty years.
It is past contradiction, that in Athens and other cities
of Greece there were *Βουλευτήρια*, public halls for the con-
sultation of affairs.

But if already wand'ring in the train
Of empty shades, I measure back the main ; 250
Plant the fair column o'er the mighty dead,
And yield his consort to the nuptial bed.

He ceas'd ; and while abash'd the peers attend,
Mentor arose, Ulysses' faithful friend :
[When fierce in arms he fought the scenes of war, 255
' My friend, he cry'd, my palace be thy care ;
' Years roll'd on years my god-like sire decay,
' Guard thou his age, and his behests obey.']

ψ. 254. *Mentor arose, Ulysses' faithful friend.*] The name of Mentor is another instance of the gratitude of our poet's temper, it being the same which belonged to a friend of his by whom he was entertained in Ithaca, during a defluxion on his eyes which seized him in his voyages ; and at whose house he is said to have laid the plan of his poem. This character of Mentor is well sustained by his speech, and by the assistance he gratefully gives to young Telemachus on all occasions.

ψ. 258. *Guard thou my sire, and his behests obey.*] The original says only, *Obey the old man.* Eustathius rightly determines, that the expression means Laertes. The poet loses no opportunity of giving Ulysses an excellent character ; this is as necessary as continually to repeat the disorders of the suitors.

————— *Servetur ad imum*

Qualis ab incepto processerit, et sibi constet.

This conduct contributes admirably to the design of the poem ; and when the poet, in the unravelling of his fable, comes to reward and punish the chief actors, we acknowledge his justice in the death of the suitors, and re-establishment of Ulysses.

Book II. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 103

Stern as he rose, he cast his eyes around 159

That flash'd with rage; and as he spoke, he frown'd.

O never, never more! let king be just,

Be mild in pow'r, or faithful to his trust!

Let tyrants govern with an iron rod,

Oppress, destroy, and be the scourge of god;

Since he who like a father held his reign, 265

So soon forgot, was just and mild in vain!

True, while my friend is griev'd, his griefs I share;

Yet now the rivals are my smallest care:

They, for the mighty mischiefs they devise,

Ere long shall pay—their forfeit lives the price. 270

But against you, ye Greeks! ye coward train,

Gods! how my soul is mov'd with just disdain!

Dumb ye all stand, and not one tongue affords

His injur'd prince the little aid of words.

While yet he spoke, Leocritus rejoin'd: 275

O pride of words, and arrogance of mind!

Would'st thou to rise in arms the Greeks advise?

Join all your pow'rs! in arms, ye Greeks, arise!

Yet would your pow'rs in vain our strength oppose;

The valiant few o'ermatch an host of foes. 280

Should great Ulysses stern appear in arms,

While the bowl circles, and the banquet warms;

ψ. 282. *While the bowl circles, and the banquet warms.*]

The original is not without obscurity: it says, *ἐπεὶ Δαίη*: or, *in the time of the banquet*. Eustathius interprets it, *τὸ εἶναι σπαργνύλον αὐτοῖς*, *The wine as it were fighting on their side*; and this agrees with what follows.

Though to his breast his spouse with transport flies,
Torn from her breast, that hour, Ulysses dies.

But hence retreating to your domes repair ; 285

To arm the vessel, Mentor ! be thy care,
And Halitherses ! thine : be each his friend :

Ye lov'd the father : go, the son attend.

But yet, I trust, the boaster means to stay
Safe in the court, nor tempt the wat'ry way. 290

Then with a rushing sound, th' assembly bend
Diverse their steps : the rival rout ascend

The design of this speech is to deter the people of Ithaca from rising in the cause of Ulysses : Mentor speaks justly ; Leocritus insolently : Mentor sets before them the worth of Ulysses ; Leocritus the power of the suitors : Mentor speaks like a brave man ; Leocritus, observes Eustathius, like a coward, who, wanting true courage, flies to the assistance of wine to raise a false one.

Perhaps it may be objected, that there is not a sufficient distinction in the characters of the several suitors : they are all described as insolent voluptuaries. But though they agree in this general character, yet there is something distinguishing in the particular persons : thus Antinous derides, Eurymachus covers villany with mildness : Antinous is ever the foremost in outrage, Eurymachus generally his second : a greater distinction is neither necessary, nor possible to be represented. What the poet is to describe, is the insolence of the suitors, and the disorders they create in his family and kingdom ; he is obliged to dwell upon these circumstances, because they are essential to his design : and consequently that general resemblance of their characters, is not a fault in the poet.

ψ. 291. *Then, with a rushing sound, etc.*] The assembly, which was convened by Telemachus, is broke

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Book II. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 105

The royal dome ; while sad the prince explores
The neighb'ring main, and sorrowing treads the shores.
There, as the waters o'er his hands he shed, 295
The royal suppliant to Minerva pray'd.

O goddess! who descending from the skies
Vouchsaf'd thy presence to my wond'ring eyes,
By whose commands the raging deeps I trace,
And seek my fire through storms and rolling seas! 300
Hear from thy heav'ns above, -oh warrior maid!
Descend once more, propitious to my aid.
Without thy presence vain is thy command;
Greece, and the rival train thy voice withstand.

Indulgent to his pray'r, the goddess took 305
Sage Mentor's form, and thus like Mentor spoke.

O prince, in early youth divinely wise,
Born the Ulysses of thy age to rise!

up in a riotous manner by Leocritus, who had no right to dissolve it. This agrees with the lawless state of the country in the absence of its king, and shews, says Eustathius, that the suitors had usurped the chief authority.

There is a fine contrast between the behaviour of Telemachus and that of the suitors. They return to repeat their disorders and debauches; Telemachus retires to supplicate the goddess of wisdom, to assist him in his enterprizes. Thus the poet raises the character of Telemachus; he has shewed him to be a youth of a brave spirit, a good speaker, and here represents him as a person of piety.

ψ. 307. *The speech of Minerva.*] This speech of Minerva is suited to encourage a young man to imitate the virtue of his father, and not to suffer himself to be overcome by any appearance of difficulties. She sets

If to the son the father's worth descends,
 O'er the wide waves success thy ways attends : 310
 To tread the walks of death he stood prepar'd,
 And what he greatly thought he nobly dar'd
 Were not wise sons descendant of the wise,
 And did not heroes from great heroes rise,
 Vain were my hopes : few sons attain the praise 315
 Of their great fires, and most their fires disgrace.
 But since thy veins paternal virtue fires,
 And all Penelope thy soul inspires,
 Go, and succeed ! the rival aims despise :
 For never, never, wicked man was wise. 320
 Blind they rejoice, though now, ev'n now they fall ;
 Death hastes amain : one hour o'erwhelms them all !
 And lo, with speed we plow the wat'ry way ;
 My pow'r shall guard thee, and my hand convey :
 The winged vessel studious I prepare, 325
 Through seas and realms companion of thy care.
 Thou to the court ascend ; and to the shores
 (When night advances) bear the naval stores ;
 Bread, that decaying man with strength supplies,
 And gen'rous wine, which thoughtful sorrow flies. 330
 Mean while the mariners by my command
 Shall speed aboard, a valiant chosen band.

his father before his eyes, and tells him, there was never
 any danger which he durst not encounter ; if he should
 suffer himself to be discouraged, he would prove him-
 self an unworthy son of a brave father. Dacier.
 Eustathius.

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Wide o'er the bay, by vessel vessel rides ;
The best I chuse, to waft thee o'er the tides.

She spoke: to his high dome the prince returns, 335
And as he moves, with royal anguish mourns.

'Twas riot all, among the lawless train ;
Boar bled by boar, and goat by goat lay slain.

Arriv'd, his hand the gay Antinous prest,
And thus deriding, with a smile address'd. 340

Grieve not, oh daring prince ! that noble heart :
Ill suits gay youth the stern heroic part.
Indulge the genial hour, unbend thy soul,
Leave thought to age, and drain the flowing bowl.

ψ. 341. *Antinous's speech.*] This speech must be understood ironically : ἔργον τε ἔπος τε is used as before, and has relation to the preceding harangues of Telemachus to the people, and his intended voyage ; by way of derision Antinous bids him not trouble his brave spirit in contriving any more orations, or in any bold attempt to find out Ulysses ; or to act the orator, or hero's part.

The critics have almost generally condemned these pieces of gaiety and raillery, as unworthy of heroic poetry : if ever they are proper, they must be so in the mouths of these suitors ; persons of no serious, or noble characters : mirth, wine, and feasting is their constant employment ; and consequently if they fall into absurdities, they act suitably to their characters. Milton, the best and greatest imitator of Homer, has followed him unworthily in this respect ; I mean, has debased even this low raillery into greater lowness, by playing upon words and syllables. But in this place the raillery is not without its effect, by shewing the utmost contempt of Telemachus ; and surely it is the lowest degree of calamity to be at once oppressed and despised.

Studious to ease thy grief, our care provides 345

The bark, to waft thee o'er the swelling tides.

Is this, returns the prince, for mirth a time ?

When lawless gluttons riot, mirth's a crime ;

The luscious wines dishonour'd lose their taste,

The song is noise, and impious is the feast. 350

Suffice it to have spent with swift decay

The wealth of kings, and made my youth a prey,

But now the wise instructions of the sage,

And manly thoughts inspir'd by manly age,

'Teach me to seek redress for all my woe, 355

Here, or in Pyle.—in Pyle or here, your foe.

Deny your vessels, ye deny in vain ;

A private voyager I pass the main.

Free breathe the winds, and free the billows flow,

And where on earth I live, I live your foe. 360

He spoke and frown'd, nor longer deign'd to stay,

Sternly his hand withdrew, and strode away.

Mean time, o'er all the dome, they quaff, they feast, }

Derisive taunts were spread from guest to guest, }

And each in jovial mood his mate address. }

Tremble ye not, oh friends ! and coward fly, 366

Doom'd by the stern Telemachus to dye ?

To Pyle or Sparta to demand supplies,

Big with revenge, the mighty warrior flies :

ψ. 368. *To Pyle or Sparta to demand supplies.*] It is observable, says Eustathius, that the poet had in his choice several expedients to bring about the destruction of the suitors, but he rejects them, and chuses the most

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Or comes from Ephyre with poisons fraught, 370
And kills us all in one tremendous draught ?

Or who can say, his gamesome mate replies,
But while the dangers of the deep he tries,
He, like his fire, may sink depriv'd of breath,
And punish us unkindly by his death ? 379

What mighty labours would he then create,
To seize his treasures, and divide his state,
The royal palace to the queen convey, —
Or him she blesses in the bridal day !

difficult method, out of reverence to truth, being unwilling to falsify the histories of Sparta and Pylos. This has a double effect ; it furnishes the poet with a series of noble incidents ; and also gives an air of probability to the story of Ulysses and Telemachus.

§. 378. *The royal palace to the queen convey.*] The suitors allot the palace to Penelope: it being, says Eustathius, the only thing that they cannot consume; and adds, that the expression of the suitors concerning the labour they should undergo in dividing the substance of Ulysses, shews the wealth and abundance of that heroe. Dacier has found out an allusion between *φόνον* in the first speech, and *κόνον* in the second; they differing only in one letter: she calls this a beauty, which she laments she cannot preserve in her translation. She is the only commentator that ever was quick-sighted enough to make the discovery. The words have no relation; they stand at a sufficient distance; and I believe Homer would have thought such trifling unworthy of his poetry. So that all the honour which accrues from that observation must be ascribed (in this case, as in many others) to the commentator, and not the author.

Mean time the lofty rooms the prince surveys, 380
 Where lay the treasures of th' Ithacian race :
 Here ruddy brags and gold refulgent blaz'd ;
 There polish'd chests embroider'd vestures grac'd ;
 Here jars of oil breath'd from a rich perfume ;
 There casks of wine in rows adorn'd the dome. 385

ψ. 381. *Where lay the treasures of th' Ithacian race.*]
 Such passages as these have ever furnished critics with
 matter of raillery : they think such household cares un-
 worthy of a king, and that this conduct suits better
 with vulgar persons of less fortune. I confess, such de-
 scriptions now would be ridiculous in a poet, because
 unsuitable to our manners. But if we look upon such
 passages as pictures and exact representations of the old
 world, the reader will find a sensible pleasure in them.

It is a true observation, that the Iliad is chiefly suit-
 able to the condition of kings and heroes ; and conse-
 quently filled with circumstances in which the greatest
 part of mankind can have no concern or interest : the
 Odyssey is of more general use ; the story of it is a se-
 ries of calamities, which concern every man, as every
 man may feel them. We can bring the sufferings of
 Ulysses in some degree home to ourselves, and make
 his condition our own ; but what private person can
 ever be in the circumstances of Agamemnon or Achil-
 les ? What I would infer from this is, that the rea-
 der ought not to take offence at any such descriptions,
 which are only mean as they differ from the fashions of
 the later ages. In the Iliad, Achilles, when he acts in
 the common offices of life, and not as an hero, is li-
 able to the same objection. But if the manners of the
 antient ages be considered, we shall be reconciled to
 the actions of the antient heroes ; and consequently to
 Homer.

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(Pure flav'rous wine, by gods in bounty giv'n,
And worthy to exalt the feasts of heav'n.)

Untouch'd they stood, till his long labours o'er

The great Ulysses reach'd his native shore.

A double strength of bars secur'd the gates : 390

Fast by the door the wife Euryclea waits ;

Euryclea, who, great Ops ! thy lineage shar'd,

And watch'd all night, all day ; a faithful guard.

To whom the prince. O thou, whose guardian care

Nurs'd the most wretched king that breathes the air !

Untouch'd and sacred may these vessels stand, 395

Till great Ulysses views his native land.

But by thy care twelve urns of wine be fill'd,

Next these in worth, and firm those urns be seal'd ;

And twice ten measures of the choicest flour 400

Prepar'd, ere yet descends the evening hour.

For when the fav'ring shades of night arise,

And peaceful slumbers close my mother's eyes,

ψ. 394. — *Oh thou, whose guardian care*

Nurs'd the most wretched king.]

Euryclea was not properly the nurse of Telemachus, but of Ulysses ; so that she is called so not in a strict sense, but as one concerned in his education from his infancy, and as a general appellation of honour. Telemachus here reserves the best wines for Ulysses ; a lesson, observes Eustathius, that even in the smallest matters we ought to pay a deference to our parents. These occasional and seemingly-trivial circumstances are not without their use, if not as poetical ornaments, yet as moral instructions.

Me from our coast shall spreading sails convey,
To seek Ulysses through the wat'ry way. 405

While yet he spoke, she fill'd the walls with cries,
And tears ran trickling from her aged eyes.

Oh whither, whither flies my son? she cry'd,
To realms, that rocks and roaring seas divide?

In foreign lands thy father's days decay'd, 410
And foreign lands contain the mighty dead.

The wat'ry way ill-fated if thou try,
All, all must perish, and by fraud you die!

Then stay, my child! storms beat, and rolls the main;
Oh beat those storms, and roll the seas in vain! 415

Far hence, reply'd the prince, thy fears be driv'n:
Heav'n calls me forth; these counsels are of heav'n.

But by the powers that hate the perjur'd, swear,
To keep my voyage from the royal ear,

Nor uncompell'd the dang'rous truth betray, 420
Till twice ~~fix~~ times descends the lamp of day:

ψ. 421. *Till twice six times descends the lamp of day.*]

It may be demanded how it was probable, if possible, that the departure of Telemachus could be concealed twelve days from the knowledge of so fond a mother as Penelope? It must be allowed, that this would not be possible except in a time of such great disorder as the suitors created: Penelope confined herself almost continually within her own apartment, and very seldom appeared publicly; so that there is no improbability in this relation. Dacier.

Eustathius make a criticism upon the words ἀπομύναι and ἐπομύναι, the former is used negatively, the latter affirmatively; namely, the former in swearing *not to perform* a thing, the latter *to perform it*.

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Left the sad tale a mother's life impair,
And grief destroy what time a while would spare.

Thus he. The matron with uplifted eyes
Attests th' all-seeing sovereign of the skies. 425

Then studious she prepares the choicest flour,
The strength of wheat, and wines an ample store.

While to the rival train the prince returns,
The martial goddess with impatience burns;
Like thee, Telemachus, in voice and size, 430

With speed divine from street to street she flies,
She bids the mariners prepar'd to stand,
When night descends, embodied on the strand.

Then to Noemon swift she runs, she flies,
And asks a bark : the chief a bark supplies. 435

ψ. 432. *She bids the mariners, etc.*] It is probable that this passage of Minerva preparing the mariners, etc. is thus to be understood : the men of Ithaca, retaining in memory the speech of Telemachus, and believing that what he then said, and now requests, was agreeable to justice ; and having as it were his image graven upon their hearts ; voluntarily resolve to lend him assistance : so that Minerva is to be taken allegorically, to imply that it was every person's own reason that induced him to assist Telemachus. Eustathius.

ψ. 435. *Noemon — the bark supplies.*] It may be asked why this particularity is necessary, and may it not be thought that such a little circumstance is insignificant ? The answer is, that a great deal depends upon this particularity ; no less than the discovery of the voyage of Telemachus to the suitors ; and consequently, whatever the suitors act in order to intercept him takes its rise from this little incident ; the fountain is indeed small, but a large stream of poetry flows from it.

And now, declining with his sloping wheels,
 Down sunk the sun behind the western hills.
 The goddess shov'd the vessel from shores,
 And stow'd within its womb the naval stores,
 Full in the openings of the spacious main 440
 It rides ; and now descends the sailor train.

Next, to the court, impatient of delay
 With rapid step the goddess urg'd her way :
 There ev'ry eye with slumbrous chains she bound,
 And dash'd the flowing goblet to the ground. 445
 Drowzy they rose, with heavy fumes oppress'd,
 Reel'd from the palace, and retir'd to rest.

Then thus, in Mentor's rev'rend form array'd,
 Spoke to Telemachus the martial maid.

ψ. 444. *There every eye with slumbrous chains she bound.*]
 The words in the original are *κόμην* and *ὕπνος*, which
 are not to be taken for being *asleep*, but *drowzy*; this
 is evident from the usage of *καθεύδων*, in the conclusion
 of the first book of the Iliad, where the signification has
 been mistaken by most translators : they make Jupiter
 there to be asleep ; though two lines afterwards, in the
 second book, Homer expressly says,

*Th' immortals slumber'd on their thrones above :
 All but the ever-waking eyes of Jove.*

It may be asked how Minerva can be said to occasion
 this drowziness in the suitors, and make them retire
 sooner than usual ? Eustathius replies, that the person
 who furnished the wine supplied it in greater quantities
 than ordinary, through which wine they contracted a
 drowziness : in this sense Minerva, or wisdom, may be
 said to assist the designs of Telemachus.

Lo ! on the seas prepar'd the vessel stands ; 450

Th' impatient mariner thy speed demands.

Swift as she spoke, with rapid pace she leads,

The footsteps of the deity he treads.

Swift to the shore they move : along the strand

The ready vessel rides, the sailors ready stand 455

He bids them bring their stores ; th' attending train

Load the tall bark, and launch into the main.

The prince and goddess to the stern ascend ;

To the strong stroke at once the rowers bend.

Full from the west she bids fresh breezes blow ; 460

The sable billows foam and roar below.

The chief his orders gives : th' obedient band

With due observance wait the chief's command ;

With speed the mast they rear, with speed unbind

The spacious sheet, and stretch it to the wind. 465

ψ. 460. *She bids fresh breezes blow.*] This also is an allegory, and implies that the sailors had the experience and art to guide the ship before the winds ; but poetry that delights to raise every circumstance, exalts it into the marvellous, and ascribes it to the goddess of wisdom. Eustathius.

ψ. 464. *With speed the mast they rear, etc.*] It is observable, that Homer never passes by an opportunity of describing the sea, or a ship under sail ; (and in many other places, as well as in this, he dwells largely upon it :) I take the reason to be, not only because it furnished him with variety of poetical images, but because he himself having made frequent voyages, had a full idea of it, and consequently was delighted with it : this is evident from his conduct in the Iliad, where variety of allusions and similitudes are drawn from the sea, and are not the smallest ornaments of his poetry.

High o'er the roaring waves the spreading sails
 Bow the tall mast, and swell before the gales ;
 The crooked keel the parting surge divides,
 And to the stern retreating roll the tides,
 And now they ship their oars, and crown with wine
 The holy goblet to the pow'rs divine :

471

ψ. 470. ——— *And crown with wine*

The holy goblet to the pow'rs divine.]

The custom of libations was frequent upon all solemn occasions, before meat, before sleep, voyages, journeys ; and in all religious rites, sacrifices, etc. They were always made with wine, pure and unmixed, whence *ἄκρατον* is a word frequent in antient authors. Sometimes they used mixed wine in sacrifices ; but Eustathius says, that this mixture was of wine with wine, and not of wine with water ; hence came the distinction of *ἑσπονδον* and *ἄσπονδον*, the unlawful and lawful libation ; wine unmixed was lawful, the mixed unlawful. Homer in this place uses *ἐπισεφίας χρητῆρας*, or, *goblets crowned with wine* ; that is, filled till the wine stood above the brime of the goblet ; they esteemed it an irreverence to the gods not to fill the cups full, for then only they esteemed the libation *whole* and *perfect*, *ὅλον καὶ τέλειον*.

This book takes up the space of one day and one night : it opens with the morning ; the speeches in the council, with the preparations for the voyage of Telemachus, are the subject of the day ; and the voyage is finished by the next morning. By this last circumstance we may learn, that Ithaca was distant from Pylos but one night's voyage, nay, something less, there being some time spent after the setting of the sun, in carrying the provisions from the palace to the vessel.

The book consists chiefly in the speeches of Telemachus and his friends, against those of the suitors. It shews the great judgment of the poet in chusing this

Imploring all the gods that reign above,
But chief the blue-ey'd progeny of Jove.

Thus all the night they stem the liquid way,
And end their voyage with the morning ray. 475

method : hence we see the causes preceeding the effects ; and know from what spring every action flowed : we are never at a loss for a reason for every incident ; the speeches are, as it were, the ground-work upon which he builds all that relates to the adventures of Telemachus.

In the Iliad, after the dissolution of the council in the first book, and the dissention between Agamemnon and Achilles, we immediately see upon what hinge the fable turns. So in the Odyssey, after the poet has laid before us the warm debates between the suitors and Telemachus, we immediately expect them to act as enemies : the war is declared, and we become judges as well as spectators of the scenes of action. Thus Homer adds the perspicuity of history to the ornaments of poetry.

with

T H E
O D Y S S E Y.

B O O K III.

T H E A R G U M E N T.

The interview of Telemachus and Nestor.

Telemachus, guided by Pallas in the shape of Mentor, arrives in the morning at Pylos; where Nestor and his sons are sacrificing on the sea-shore to Neptune. Telemachus declares the occasion of his coming, and Nestor relates what past in their return from Troy, how their fleets were separated, and he never since heard of Ulysses. They discourse concerning the death of Agamemnon, the revenge of Orestes, and the injuries of the suitors. Nestor advises him to go to Sparta and enquire further of Menelaus. The sacrifice ending with the night, Minerva vanishes from them in the form of an eagle: Telemachus is lodged in the palace. The next morning they sacrifice a bullock to Minerva, and Telemachus proceeds on his journey to Sparta, attended by Pisistratus.

The SCENE lies on the sea-shore of Pylos.

THE sacred sun, above the waters rais'd,
Through heav'n's eternal, brazen portals blaz'd;
And wide o'er earth diffus'd his chearing ray,
To gods and men to give the golden day.

The scene is now removed from Ithaca to Pylos, and with it a new vein of poetry is opened: instead of the

Now on the coast of Pyle the vessel falls, 5
Before old Neleus' venerable walls.

riots of the suitors, we are entertained with the wisdom and piety of Nestor. This and the following book are a kind of supplement to the Iliad; the nature of epic poetry requires that something should be left to the imagination of the reader, nor is the picture to be intirely drawn at full length. Homer therefore, to satisfy our curiosity, gives an account of the fortunes of those great men, who made so noble a figure at the siege of Troy. This conduct also shews his art: variety gives life and delight; and it is much more necessary in epic than in comic or tragic poetry sometimes to shift the scenes, to diversify and embellish the story. But as on the stage the poet ought not to step at once from one part of the world to a too remote country, (for this destroys credibility, and the auditor cannot fancy himself this minute here, and the next a thousand miles distant) so in epic poetry, every removal must be within the degrees of probability. We have here a very easy transition; the poet carries his hero no farther than he really might sail in the compass of time he allots for his voyage. If he had still dwelt upon the disorders of the suitors without interruption, he must grow tiresome; but he artfully breaks the thread of their story with beautiful incidents and episodes, and reserves the further recital of their disorders for the end of his poem: by this method we sit down with fresh appetite to the entertainment, and rise at last not cloyed, but satisfied.

ψ. 2: *Through heav'n's eternal, brazen portals—*] The original calls heaven πολύχαλκον, or *brazen*; the reason of it arises either from the palaces of the gods being built of brass by Vulcan; or rather the word implies no more than the stability of heaven, which for the same reason is in other places called σιδήρεον, or *framed of iron*. Eustathius.

There, suppliant to the monarch of the flood,
At nine green theatres the Pylians stood,
Each held five hundred, (a deputed train)
At each, nine oxen on the sand lay slain. 10
They taste the entrails, and the altars load
With smoking thighs, an offering to the god.

ψ. 8. *At nine green theatres.*] It may be asked why the poet is so very particular as to mention that the Pylians were divided into nine assemblies; and may it not seem a circumstance of no importance? Eustathius answers from the antients, that there were nine cities subject to the power of Nestor: five in Pylos, the rest in Boeotia; the poet therefore allots one bank or theatre to every city, which consisted of 500 men, the whole number amounting to 4500: these cities furnished the like complement of men to Nestor for the war at Troy: he sailed in ninety vessels, and allowing fifty men to each vessel, they amount to that number. Hence it appears, that this was a national sacrifice, every city furnished nine bulls, and by consequence the whole nation were partakers of it.

ψ. Ibid. *The sacrifice of the Pylians.*] This was a very solemn sacrifice of the Pylians; how comes it then to pass, that Homer passes it over in one line? Eustathius answers, that the occasion disallows a longer description, and Homer knows when to speak, and when to be silent. He chuses to carry on the adventures of Telemachus, rather than amuse himself in descriptions that contribute nothing to the story; he finds a time of more leisure in the latter part of this book, and there he describes it at length.

ψ. 11. *They taste the entrails.*] That is, every person eat a small portion of the sacrifice, and by this method every person became partaker of it.

There is nothing in Homer that shews where this fa-
VOL. I. L

Full for the port the Ithacensians stand,
 And furl their sails, and issue on the land.
 Telemachus already prest the shore ; 15
 Not first, the Pow'r of wisdom march'd before,
 And ere the sacrificing throng he join'd,
 Admonish'd thus his well-attending mind.

Proceed, my son ! this youthful shame expel ;
 An honest business ne'er blush to tell. 20
 To learn what fates thy wretched fire detain,
 We past the wide, immeasurable main.
 Meet then the senior far renown'd for sense,
 With rev'rent awe, but decent confidence :
 Urge him with truth to frame his fair replies ; 25
 And sure he will : for wisdom never lies.

O tell me, Mentor ! tell me, faithful guide,
 (The youth with prudent modesty reply'd)

crifice was offered, whether in a temple, on in the open air. But Eustathius tells us from Strabo, that it was in the temple of Samian Neptune, *ἐν ἱερῷ Σαμίου ποσειδῶνος.*

ψ. 25. *Urge him with truth to frame his fair replies ;
 And sure he will : for wisdom never lies.*]

This sentiment is truly noble, and as nobly expressed : the simplicity of the diction corresponds with that of the thought. Homer, in many places, testifies the utmost abhorrence of a lye. This verse is twice repeated in the present book, as well as in some others ; and nothing can be stronger in the same view than that of Achilles in the 9th Iliad :

*Who dares think one thing, and another tell,
 My heart detests him as the gates of hell.*

How shall I meet, or how accost the sage,
Unskill'd in speech, nor yet mature of age ? 30

Awful th' approach, and hard the task appears,
To question wisely men of riper years.

To whom the martial goddess thus rejoind.
Search, for some thoughts, thy own suggesting mind ;
And others, dictated by heav'nly pow'r, 35
Shall rise spontaneous in the needful hour.

For nought unprosp'rous shall thy ways attend,
Born with good omens, and with heav'n thy friend.

She spoke, and led the way with swiftest speed :
As swift, the youth pursu'd the way she led ; 40

ψ. 38. *Born with good omens, and with heav'n thy friend.*]
There is some obscurity in the Greek expression, and
the antient critics have made it more obscure by their
false interpretations ; they imagine that the poet only
meant to say, that Telemachus was the legitimate son
of Penelope and Ulysses. Eustathius.

Dacier very justly condemns this explication, as un-
worthy of Homer ; and gives us a more plain and natu-
ral interpretation ; viz. ' You were not born in despite
' of the gods, that is, you are well made, and of a good
' presence, you have good inclinations, and, in a word,
' your birth is happy.' She explains *τραρίμεν* after the
same manner : ' You were not educated in despite of
' the gods ;' that is, ' the gods have blessed your edu-
' cation :' this explication seems to be just, and answers
perfectly the design of Minerva ; which was to give a
decent assurance to Telemachus. You are a person,
says the goddess, of a good presence, and happy edu-
cation, why then should you be ashamed to appear be-
fore Nestor ?

And join'd the band before the sacred fire,
 Where sat, encompass'd with his sons, the fire.
 The youth of Pylos, some on pointed wood
 Transfix'd the fragments, some prepar'd the food.
 In friendly throngs they gather to embrace 45
 Their unknown guests, and at the banquet place.
 Pisistratus was first, to grasp their hands,
 And spread soft hides upon the yellow sands;
 Along the shore th' illustrious pair he led,
 Where Nestor sat with youthful Thrasymed. 50

ψ. 48. *And spread soft hides upon the yellow sands.*] It is with great pleasure that I read such passages in an author of so great antiquity, as are pictures of the simplicity of those heroic ages: it is the remark of Eustathius, that Pisistratus the son of a king does not seat these strangers upon purple tapestry, or any other costly furniture, but upon the skins of beasts, that had nothing to recommend them but their softness; being spread upon the sand of the sea-shores.

This whole passage pleases me extremely; there is a spirit of true devotion, morality, and good sense in it; and the decency of behaviour between Nestor and Telemachus is described very happily: Nestor shews great benevolence to Telemachus; Telemachus great reverence to Nestor: the modesty of the one, and the humanity of the other, are worthy of our observation. We see the same picture of Nestor in the Odyssey that was drawn of him in the Iliads, with this only difference, that there he was a counsellor of war, here he is painted in softer colours, ruling his people in peace, and diffusing a spirit of piety through his whole territories. He had now survived the war of Troy almost ten years; and the gods reward the old age of this wise and religious prince with peace and happiness.

To each a portion of the feast he bore,
 And held the golden goblet foaming o'er ;
 Then first approaching to the elder guest,
 The latent goddess in these words addrest.
 Whoe'er thou art, whom fortune brings to keep 55
 These rites of Neptune, monarch of the deep,
 Thee first it fits, oh stranger ! to prepare
 The due libation and the solemn pray'r :
 Then give thy friend to shed the sacred wine ;
 Though much thy younger, and his years like mine, }
 He too, I deem, implores the pow'rs divine : }
 For all mankind alike require their grace,
 All born to want ; a miserable race !

He spake, and to her hand preferr'd the bowl :
 A secret pleasure touch'd Athena's soul, 65
 To see the preference due to sacred age
 Regarded ever by the just and sage.
 Of ocean's king she then implores the grace.
 Oh thou ! whose arms this ample globe embrace,
 Fulfil our wish, and let thy glory shine 70
 On Nestor first, and Nestor's royal line ;
 Next grant the Pylian states their just desires,
 Pleas'd with their hecatomb's ascending fires ;
 Last deign Telemachus and me to bless,
 And crown our voyage with desir'd success. 75

ψ. 74. *Last deign Telemachus and me to bless —*]
 Since Minerva here mentions the name of Telemachus
 in her prayer ; how comes it to pass, that Nestor is
 at a loss to know Telemachus ? Minerva sat close by

Thus she ; and having paid the rite divine,
 Gave to Ulysses' son the rosy wine.
 Suppliant he pray'd. And now the victims drest
 They draw, divide, and celebrate the feast.
 The banquet done, the narrative old man 80
 Thus mild the pleasing conference began.

Now, gentle guests ! the genial banquet o'er,
 It fits to ask ye, what your native shore,
 And whence your race ? on what adventure, say,
 Thus far ye wander through the wat'ry way ? 85
 Relate, if business, or the thirst of gain
 Engage your journey o'er the pathless main ?

Nestor ; he must therefore be supposed to hear the prayer ; and yet in the following lines he inquires who these strangers are ? We can scarce imagine Nestor ignorant that the son of Ulysses was named Telemachus, there being so strict a friendship between Nestor and Ulysses. Perhaps therefore Minerva prayed in secret mentally : or perhaps Nestor might not take notice of what was not address'd immediately to him, and consequently make inquiry about it for the greater certainty.

ψ. 86. *Relate, if business, or the thirst of gain, etc.*]
 If we form our images of persons and actions in antient times, from the images of persons and actions in modern ages, we shall fall into great mistakes : thus in the present passage, if we annex the same idea of piracy, as it was practis'd three thousand years past, to piracy as it is practis'd in our ages ; what can be a greater affront than this inquiry of Nestor ? But, says Eustathius, piracy was formerly not only accounted lawful, but honourable. I doubt not but Thucydides had this passage in view, when he says, that the antient poets introduce men inquiring of those who frequent the sea, if they be pyrates, as a thing no way ignominious. Thucydides

Where savage pyrates seek through seas unknown
The lives of others, vent'rous of their own.

Urg'd by the precepts by the goddess giv'n, 90

And fill'd with confidence infus'd from heav'n,

The youth whom Pallas destin'd to be wife

And fam'd among the sons of men, replies.

Enquir'st thou, father ! from what coast we came ?

(Oh grace and glory of the Grecian name !) 95

From where high Ithaca o'erlooks the floods,

Brown with o'er-arching shades and pendent woods.

Us to these shores our filial duty draws,

A private sorrow, not a public cause.

My fire I seek, where-e'er the voice of fame 100

Has told the glories of his noble name,

The great Ulysses ; fam'd from shore to shore

For valour much, for hardy suff'ring more.

Long time with thee before proud Ilion's wall

In arms he fought ; with thee beheld her fall. 105

Of all the chiefs, this hero's fate alone

Has Jove reserv'd, unheard of, and unknown ;

Whether in fields by hostile fury slain,

Or sunk by tempests in the gulphy main ?

tells us in the same place, that all those who lived on the sea-coast, or in the islands, maintained themselves by frequent inroads upon unfortified towns, and if such pyracies were nobly performed, they were accounted glorious. Herodotus also writes, that many of the antients, especially about Thrace, thought it ignominious to live by labouring the ground, but to live by piracy and plunder was esteemed a life of honour. Eustathius.

Of this to learn, oppress'd with tender fears 110

Lo at thy knee his suppliant son appears.

If or thy certain eye, or curious ear,

Have learn'd his fate, the whole dark story clear :

And oh ! whate'er heav'n destin'd to betide

Let neither flatt'ry smooth, nor pity hide. 115

Prepar'd I stand : he was but born to try

The lot of man ; to suffer, and to die,

Oh then, if ever through the ten years war

The wife, the good Ulysses claim'd thy care ;

If e'er he join'd thy council, or thy sword, 120

True in his deed, and constant to his word ;

Far as thy mind through backward time can see,

Search all thy stores of faithful memory :

'Tis sacred truth I ask, and ask of thee.

To him experienc'd Nestor thus rejoin'd. 125

O friend ! what sorrows dost thou bring to mind ?

ψ. 125. *The speech of Nestor.*] Eustathius observes the modesty of Nestor : Telemachus had ascribed the fall of Troy in a great measure to Nestor ; but Nestor speaks not in particular of himself, but is content with his share of glory in common with other warriors : he speaks in the plural number, and joins all the Greeks as in the war, so in the glory of it. Nestor mentions the sufferings of the Greeks by sea, as well as by land, during the siege of Troy : to understand this, it is necessary to remember, that the Greeks made many expeditions against other places during the war, both by sea and land, as appears, from many passages in the Iliads, particularly from what Achilles says in the ninth book.

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Shall I the long, laborious scene review ?
 And open all the wounds of Greece anew ?
 What toils by sea ! where dark in quest of prey
 Dauntless we rov'd ; Achilles led the way : 130
 What toils by land ! where mixt in fatal fight
 Such numbers fell, such heroes sunk to night :
 There Ajax great, Achilles there the brave,
 There wise Patroclus, fill an early grave :
 There too my son — ah once my best delight, 135
 Once swift of foot, and terrible in fight,
 In whom stern courage with soft virtue join'd,
 A faultless body, and a blameless mind :

ψ. 133. *There Ajax great, Achilles there the brave.*]
 I have observed, that the poet inserts into the Odyssey
 several incidents that happened after the fall of Troy,
 and by that method agreeably diversifies his poetry, and
 satisfies the curiosity of the reader. Eustathius remarks
 here, that he gives a title of honour to all the heroes he
 mentions, except only to Achilles. Achilles had been
 the occasion of the sufferings and death of many of the
 Greeks by his anger, and obstinacy in refusing to obey
 Agamemnon ; therefore while Nestor is lamenting the
 calamities of the Greeks, he passes over Achilles without
 any honourable mention, who had so greatly added to
 their sufferings. But I think this remark chimerical :
 one may as well say Achilles needed no epithet to dis-
 tinguish him.

It is with pleasure I see the old man dwell upon the
 praise of Antilochus : the father enlarges upon the fame
 of the son ; he gives him four epithets of glory ; and
 while Ajax is only praised as a warrior, Antilochus is
 great and good, excellent in the standing fight, or swift
 to pursue an enemy. Longinus has observed upon
 the beauty of this passage.

Antilochus — what more can I relate ?
 How trace the tedious series of our fate ? 140
 Not added years on years my task could close,
 The long historian of my country's woes :
 Back to thy native islands might'st thou fail,
 And leave half-heard the melancholy tale.
 Nine painful years, on that detested shore 145
 What stratagems we form'd, what toils we bore ?
 Still lab'ring on, till scarce at last we found
 Great Jove propitious, and our conquest crown'd.
 Far o'er the rest thy mighty father shin'd,
 In wit, in prudence, and in force of mind. 150
 Art thou the son of that illustrious sire ?
 With joy I grasp thee, and with love admire.
 So like your voices, and your words so wise,
 Who finds thee younger must consult his eyes.
 Thy sire and I were one ; nor vary'd ought 155
 In public sentence, or in private thought ;

ψ. 149. *Far o'er the rest thy mighty father shin'd.*] Nestor speaks of Ulysses as an inseparable friend ; and it shews an excellent disposition in them both, to be rivals, and yet without envy. But the art of Nestor is remarkable, he first gives the character to Ulysses of being superior in wisdom to all the Greeks ; and yet at last he finds a way secretly to set himself on a level with him, if not above him : we ever, says he, thought the same thoughts, and were ever of the same sentiments : which, though it may imply that they were of equal wisdom ; yet there is room left for it to signify, that Ulysses always assented to the wisdom of Nestor. Eustathius.

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Alike to council or th' assembly came,
 With equal souls, and sentiments the same.
 But when, by wisdom won, proud Ilion burn'd,
 And in their ships the conqu'ring Greeks return'd ; 160
 'Twas God's high will the victors to divide,
 And turn th' event, confounding human pride :
 Some he destroy'd, some scatter'd as the dust,
 (Not all were prudent, and not all were just)
 Then Discord, sent by Pallas from above, 165
 Stern daughter of the great avenger Jove,

ψ. 157. *The council or the assembly.*] There is a remarkable difference between βουλὴ and ἀγορὰ. The former denotes a select number of men assembled in council, the latter a public assembly where all the people were present. Eustathius.

ψ. 165. *Sent by Pallas* —] Nestor in modesty conceals the reason of the anger of the goddess ; out of respect to Ajax the Locrean who was then dead : the crime of Ajax was the violation of Cassandra even in the temple of Minerva before her image. But why should the goddess be angry at others for the crime of Ajax ? This is because they omitted to punish the offender. If Ajax was criminal in offending, others are criminal for not punishing the offence. Eustathius.

The crime of Ajax is mentioned in Virgil. *Æn.* i.

————— *Pallasne exurere classem
 Argivum, atque ipsos potuit submergere ponto,
 Unius ob noxam, et furias Ajacis Oilei ? etc.*

Could angry Pallas with revengeful spleen
 The Grecian navy burn, and drown the men ?
 She for the fault of one offending foe,
 The bolts of Jove himself presum'd to throw. *Dryd.*

The brother-kings inspir'd with fell debate ;
 Who call'd to council all th' Achaian state,
 But call'd untimely (not the sacred rite
 Observ'd, nor heedful of the setting light, 170
 Nor herald sworn, the session to proclaim)
 Sour with debauch, a reeling tribe they came.
 To these the cause of meeting they explain,
 And Menelaus moves to cross the main ;
 Not so the king of men : he will'd to stay ; 175
 The sacred rites and hecatombs to pay,
 And calm Minerva's wrath. Oh blind to fate !
 The gods not lightly change their love, or hate.

Virgil borrowed the description of the punishment of Ajax from the fourth of the Odyssey.

ψ. 168, etc. *Who call'd to council —*

But call'd untimely, etc.

It may seem at first view, that the poet affirms the night to be an improper season to convene a council. This is not his meaning : in the Iliad, there are several councils by night ; nay, ἐν νυκτὶ βουλῇ is used proverbially to express the best concerted councils. What therefore Nestor here condemns is the calling not a select, but public assembly of the soldiers in the night, when they are not in danger of the enemy, and when they are apt to fly into insolence through wine, and the joy of victory. The night is then undoubtedly an ill chosen season : because the license of the soldier cannot be so well restrained by night as by day. Eustathius.

ψ. 177. *Oh blind to fate !*] It may be asked why Nestor condemns so solemnly this hero, calling him Νήπιος, when he describes him in so pious an action ? this is not because the gods are implacable, for as Ho-

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Book III. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 133

With ire-ful taunts each other they oppose,
 Till in loud tumult all the Greeks arose. 180
 Now diff'rent counsels ev'ry breast divide,
 Each burns with rancour to the adverse side ;
 Th' unquiet night strange projects entertain'd ;
 (So Jove, that urg'd us to our fate, ordain'd.)
 We, with the rising morn our ships unmoor'd, 185
 And brought our captives and our stores aboard ;
 But half the people with respect obey'd
 The king of men, and at his bidding stay'd.
 Now on the wings of winds our course we keep,
 (For God had smooth'd the waters of the deep) 190
 For Tenedos we spread our eager oars,
 There land and pay due victims to the Pow'rs :
 To bless our safe return we join in pray'r,
 But angry Jove dispers'd our vows in air,
 And rais'd new discord. Then (so heav'n decreed) 195
 Ulysses first and Nestor disagreed :
 Wise as he was, by various counsels sway'd,
 He there, though late, to please the monarch, stay'd.

mer himself writes, Στρατιῶν δὲ καὶ δίοι αὐτοὶ ; but because he vainly imagined that they would so soon be appeased, without any justice done upon the offender :
 Θὶὸν βῆδὶὸς παλίντροπον are the words of Eustathius.

ψ. 197. *Wise as he was, by various counsels sway'd,
 He there, tho' late, to please the monarch, stay'd.]*

It is with great address that Nestor relates the return of Ulysses to Agamemnon; he ascribes it not directly to Ulysses, but to his associates in the voyage; he mollifies it, in complaisance to Telemachus. But Nestor, accord-

But I, determin'd, stem the foamy floods,
 Warn'd of the coming fury of the gods. 200
 With us Tydides fear'd, and urg'd his haste :
 And Menelaus came, but came the last.
 He join'd our vessels in the Lesbian bay,
 While yet we doubted of our wat'ry way ;
 If to the right to urge the pilot's toil, 205
 (The safer road) beside the Psyrrian isle :
 Or the strait course to rocky Chios plow,
 And anchor under Mimas' shaggy brow ?
 We sought direction of the pow'r divine :
 The God propitious gave the guiding sign ; 210
 Through the mid seas he bids our navy steer,
 And in Eubœa shun the woes we fear.
 The whistling winds already wak'd the sky ;
 Before the whistling winds the vessels fly,
 With rapid swiftness cut the liquid way, 215
 And reach Geresus at the point of day.

ing to Dacier, conceals the true reason of his return ;
 it was not to please Agamemnon, but out of fear of the
 goddess Minerva, whose statue he had taken by force
 from Troy : to appease that goddess he returns to join
 in sacrifice with Agamemnon. Eustathius.

ψ. 200. *Warn'd of the coming fury of the gods.*] It
 may be asked how Nestor attained this knowledge of the
 evils which the gods were preparing ? Eustathius a-
 scribes it to his great wisdom, which gave him an in-
 sight into futurity. Dacier, with more reason, tell us,
 that Nestor knew that Minerva had been offended, and
 might consequently apprehend a punishment was to be
 inflicted for the offence.

There hecatombs of bulls to Neptune slain
 High-flaming please the monarch of the main.
 The fourth day shone, when all their labours o'er
 Tydides' vessels touch'd the wish'd-for shore : 220
 But I to Pylos scud before the gales,
 The god still breathing on my swelling sails ;
 Sep'rate from all, I safely landed here ;
 Their fates or fortunes never reach'd my ear.
 Yet what I learn'd, attend ; as here I sat,
 And ask each voyager each hero's fate ;
 Curious to know, and willing to relate.

Safe reach'd the Myrmidons their native land,
 Beneath Achilles' warlike son's command.

ψ. 221. *But I to Pylos, etc.*] Eustathius observes from the ancients, that the poet, with great judgment, suspends, and breaks off this relation of Nestor ; by this method he has an opportunity to carry Telemachus to other countries, and insert into his poem the story of Menelaus and Helen : this method likewise gives an air of probability to what he writes ; the poet seems afraid to deceive, and when he sends Telemachus to other parts for better intelligence, he seems to consult truth and exactness.

ψ. 229. *Achilles' warlike son.*] The son of Achilles was named Neoptolemus, by others Pyrrhus ; his story is this : when he had reached Thessaly with the Myrmidons of Achilles, by the advice of Thetis he set fire to his vessels : and being warned by Helenus, from the oracles, to fix his habitation where he found a house whose foundations were iron, whose walls were wood, and whose roof was wool ; he took his journey on foot, and coming to a certain lake of Epirus, he found some persons fixing their spears with the point downwards

Those, whom the heir of great Apollo's art, 230
 Brave Philoctetes, taught to wing the dart;
 And those whom Idomen from Ilion's plain
 Had led, securely cross the dreadful main.
 How Agamemnon touch'd his Argive coast,
 And how his life by fraud and force he lost, 235
 And how the murd'rer pay'd his forfeit breath;
 What land so distant from that scene of death
 But trembling heard the fame? and heard, admire
 How well the son appeas'd his slaughter'd fire!
 Ev'n to th' unhappy, that unjustly bleed, 240
 Heav'n gives posterity t' avenge the deed.
 So fell Ægythus; and may'st thou my friend,
 (On whom the virtues of thy sire descend)
 Make future times thy equal act adore,
 And be what brave Orestes was before!

into the earth, and covering the tops of them with their cloaks, and after this manner making their tents: he looked upon the oracle as fulfilled, and dwelt there. Afterwards having a son by Andromache the wife of Hector, he named him Molossus, from whom the region took the name of Molossia. From this country are *Molossian canes*, mentioned by Virgil. Eustathius.

ψ. 242. *So fell Ægythus; and may'st thou, my friend, etc.* Nestor introduces the mention of Ægythus very artfully; it is to raise an emulation in Telemachus to revenge Ulysses, as Orestes had Agamemnon; it has the intended effect, and we find that Telemachus dwells upon his story with a virtuous envy; yet at the same time with great modesty; Eustathius gives a different reading in

----- ἱσσομένοισι πύθισθαι, or,

----- ἱσσομένοισιν αἰδοῦν.

The prudent youth reply'd. Oh thou the grace
 And lasting glory of the Grecian race !
 Just was the vengeance, and to latest days
 Shall long posterity resound the praise.
 Some god this arm with equal prowess bless ! 250
 And the proud suitors shall its force confess :
 Injurious men ! who while my soul is sore
 Of fresh affronts, are meditating more.
 But heav'n denies this honour to my hand,
 Nor shall my father repossess the land : 255
 The father's fortune never to return,
 And the sad son's to suffer and to mourn !

Thus he, and Nestor took the word : my son,
 Is it then true, as distant rumours run,
 That crowds of rivals for thy mother's charms 260
 Thy palace fill with insults and alarms ?
 Say, is the fault, through tame submission thine ?
 Or leagu'd against thee, do thy people join,
 Mov'd by some oracle, or voice divine ?

both the expressions are used in Homer, the preference is therefore submitted to the reader.

y. 264. *Mov'd by some oracle, or voice divine.*] The words in the original are, *follow the voice of some god*, that is, some oracle: Homer does not confine the expression either to a good or bad sense; but the context plainly shews, that they must be understood in a bad sense; namely, to imply, that the people had recourse to pretended oracles to justify their rebellion. This is evident from what follows, where Nestor encourages Telemachus to expect that Ulysses may punish them for

And yet who knows, but ripening lies in fate 265

An hour of vengeance for the afflicted state ;

When great Ulysses shall suppress these harms,

Ulysses singly, or all Greece in arms.

their crimes, ἀποτίσσειν ἔλθων --- if there had been no crime, there ought to be no punishment.

ψ. 268. *Ulysses singly, or all Greece in arms.*] The poet shews his great judgment in preparing the reader for the destruction of the suitors ; that great catastrophe is managed by few hands, and it might seem incredible that so few could destroy so many : the poet therefore, to give an air of truth to his action, frequently inculcates the assistance of Pallas, which must at least shew, that such a great exploit is not impossible to be executed by stratagems and valour : it is by art, not strength, that Ulysses conquers.

All Greece in arms.

This is spoken in a general sense, and comprehends not only the subjects of Ulysses, or even the Pylians and Spartans, but implies, that all the Greeks would rise in the cause of Ulysses. What the suitors had spoken scoffingly in the preceding book, viz. that Telemachus was sailing to Pyle or Sparta for supplies, appears in this not to be impracticable ; so that it was choice and not necessity that determined the poet to make use of no such easy expedients for the destruction of the suitors. Eustathius.

It may be added, that the very nature of epic poetry, and of the Odyssey in particular, requires such a conduct : in the Iliad Achilles is the chief agent, and performs almost all the great actions ; Æneas is painted after the same manner by Virgil ; the one kills Hector, the other Turnus, both which are the decisive actions : it was equally necessary to exalt the character of Ulysses, by bringing him into difficulties from which he is per-

But if Athena, war's triumphant maid,
The happy son, will, as the father, aid, 270
(Whose fame and safety was her constant care
In ev'ry danger and in every war :
Never on man did heav'nly favour shine
With rays so strong, distinguish'd and divine,
As those with which Minerva mark'd the sire) 275
So might she love thee, so thy soul inspire !
Soon should their hopes in humble dust be laid,
And long oblivion of the bridal bed.

Ah ! no such hope (the prince with sighs replies)
Can touch my breast ; that blessing heav'n denies. 280
Ev'n by celestial favour were it giv'n,
Fortune or fate would cross the will of heav'n.

sonally to extricate himself : this the poet sufficiently brings about, by refusing all the easy methods for his re-establishment, because the more difficult ways are most conducive to the honour of his hero : thus as Achilles and Æneas kill Hector and Turnus with their own hands, so the suitors fall chiefly by the hand of Ulysses. It is necessary for the hero of the poem to execute the decisive action, for by this method the poet completes his character, his own greatness surmounts all difficulties, and he goes off the stage with the utmost advantage, by leaving a noble character upon the mind of the spectators.

ψ. 282. *Fortune or fate would cross the will of heav'n.*] It may be asked how an expression so near blasphemy, as Eustathius observes, could escape a person of such piety as Telemachus ? It is true, the poet makes Minerva herself correct it ; but yet the objection remains, viz. how could Telemachus speak it ? I think, since

What words are these, and what imprudence thine?
 (Thus interpos'd the martial maid divine)
 Forgetful youth! but know, the Pow'r above 285
 With ease can save each object of his love;
 Wide, as his will, extends his boundless grace;
 Nor lost in time, nor circumscrib'd by place.
 Happier his lot, who many sorrows past,
 Long-lab'ring gains his natal shore at last; 290

the poet himself condemns it, we may give it up as an indecency in Telemachus; it is natural for men to despair (and that was the condition of Telemachus,) to use a vehemence of expression, and this might transport Telemachus beyond the bounds of prudence. The only possible way that occurs to me to take off the impiety, is to have recourse to destiny: it was the opinion of the antients, that the gods could not alter destiny: and then Telemachus may mean no more, than that it was decreed by the Destinies that Ulysses shall return no more, so the gods themselves could not restore him.

Thus in the 15th of the Metamorphosis, Venus in vain applies to the gods to preserve Julius Caesar.

— *Superosque movet, qui rumpere quanquam
 Ferrea not possant veterum decreta sororum, etc.*

And a little lower Jupiter says to Venus,

— *Solo insuperabile fatum,
 Nata, movere paras?*

ψ. 289. *Happier his lot, who, etc.*] Nothing can be better imagined to encourage Telemachus, than what the poet here delivers: she sets Agamemnon in opposition to Ulysses: Agamemnon made a speedy voyage to his country, and there fell by treachery; Ulysses has long been absent, but yet is happier than Agamemnon:

Than who too speedy, hastes to end his life
 By some stern ruffian, or adult'rous wife.
 Death only is the lot which none can miss,
 And all is possible to heav'n, but this.
 The best, the dearest fav'rite of the sky 295
 Must taste that cup, for man is born to die.
 Thus check'd, reply'd Ulysses' prudent heir :

Mentor, no more — the mournful thought forbear :
 For he no more must draw his country's breath,
 Already snatch'd by fate, and the black doom of death !

the gods perhaps reserve him for better fortunes, at least
 nothing can be concluded from his long absence, and
 this is sufficient to teach Telemachus not to despair.
 Eustathius.

§. 294. *And all is possible to heav'n, but this.*] What
 Minerva here says justifies the remark I made, that what
 Telemachus seemed to have spoken rashly, may be soft-
 ened, if not vindicated, by having recourse to destiny :
 it is evident from this passage, that destiny was superior
 to the power of the gods : otherwise Minerva speaks as
 blasphemously as Telemachus : for, what difference is
 there between saying, that the gods cannot preserve
 even these they love from death, and saying that the
 gods could not save Ulysses ? Why therefore may not
 the words of Telemachus be thought to have a respect
 to destiny ?

I am of opinion, that the poet had something further
 in view by putting these words into the mouth of Mi-
 nerva : the words of Telemachus, if taken grossly,
 might appear shocking to so pious a person as Nestor,
 and make an ill impression upon him to the disadvan-
 tage of Telemachus ; Minerva therefore artfully explains
 it, and softens the horror of it by reconciling it to the
 theology of those ages.

Pass we to other subjects ; and engage 301

On themes remote the venerable sage :

(Who thrice has seen the perishable kind

Of men decay, and through three ages shin'd,

Like gods majestic, and like gods in mind.)

For much he knows, and just conclusions draws 306

From various precedents, and various laws.

ψ. 301. *Pass we to other subjects—*] Telemachus here puts several questions, as it were in a breath, to Nestor : and Plutarch observes upon this passage, that he who enquires any thing of an old man, though the old man himself has no concern in the story, wins his heart at once ; and incites a person, who is upon all occasions very willing to discourse. He introduces this as an instance of the art Telemachus uses, in adapting himself by his questions to the temper of the person with whom he converses : he puts together, continues he, several questions upon several subjects, which is more judicious than to confine his answer to a single interrogatory, and by that method deprive Nestor of one of the most pleasant enjoyments of old age, I mean the pleasure of talking. Plutarch. Symposiac.

ψ. 303. *Who thrice has seen the perishable kind
Of men decay,———*]

The poet here tells us that Nestor was now in his fourth generation : Ovid took the word *γίγνα* to signify an hundred years ; but then Nestor must have been above three hundred years old. Others, with more probability, understand it to signify a generation, or such a portion of time in which any race of men flourish together, which is computed to be about thirty years. I refer the reader to the note upon the thirty-third verse in the first book of the Iliad, for the particular age of Nestor. According to that computation, he must now be about ninety-five years of age.

O son of Neleus ! awful Nestor, tell

How he, the mighty, Agamemnon fell ?

By what strange fraud Ægyſthus wrought, relate, 310

(By force he could not) ſuch a hero's fate ?

Liv'd Menelaus not in Greece ? or where

Was then the martial brother's pious care ?

Condemn'd perhaps ſome foreign ſhore to tread ;

Or ſure Ægyſthus had not dar'd the deed. 315

To whom the full of days. Illuſtrious youth,

Attend (though partly thou haſt gueſt) the truth.

For had the martial Menelaus found

The ruſſian breathing yet on Argive ground ;

Nor earth had hid his carcaſe from the ſkies, 320

Nor Grecian virgins ſhriek'd his obſequies,

But fowls obſcene diſmember'd his remains,

And dogs had torn him on the naked plains.

While us the works of bloody Mars employ'd,

The wanton youth inglorious peace enjoy'd ; 325

He, ſtretch'd at eaſe in Argos' calm reſeſs,

(Whoſe ſtately ſteeds luxuriant paſtures bleſs)

With flattery's inſinuating art

Sooth'd the frail queen, and poiſon'd all her heart.

ψ. 309. *How he, the mighty, Agamemnon fell ?*] Telemachus does not ask this queſtion out of curioſity, but with great judgment ; he knows there were deſigns againſt his life, as well as there had been againſt Agamemnon ; he therefore aſks it that he may learn how to defeat them ; chiefly to inſtruct himſelf how beſt to aſſiſt his father upon his return, by aiding him in eſcaping the ſnares of the ſuitors. Dacier.

At first with worthy shame and decent pride,
 The royal dame his lawless suit deny'd.
 For virtue's image yet possess'd her mind,
 Taught by a master of the tuneful kind:
 Atrides, parting for the Trojan war,
 Consign'd the youthful consort to his care:

ψ. 333. *Taught by a master of the tuneful kind.*] Homer, through the whole *Odyssey*, speaks much in honour of the art which he himself loved, and in which he so eminently excelled: from these and other passages we may learn the state of poetry in those ages: 'Poets,' says Eustathius, were ranked in the class of philosophers; and the ancients made use of them as preceptors in music and morality.' Strabo quotes this very passage as an instance of the excellence of poetry in forming the soul to worthy actions: Ægisthus could not debauch Clytemnestra, till he banished the poet, who was her guide and instructor.

Various are the conjectures of the ancients about the name of the bard here celebrated: some, says Eustathius, tell us, it was Chariades, some Demodocus, some Glaucus, etc. but I pass them over, because they are conjectures.

There were many degrees of these *αἰδοῖ*; some were *αἰδοῖ σφηνων*, others *αἰδοῖ ἐπὶ γαμῶν*: but such bards as are here mentioned were of an higher station, and retained as instructors by kings and princes.

I cannot omit one remark of Eustathius: he tells us, that some persons write that these *αἰδοῖ* had their names from hence, *ὡς αἰδοῖα μὴ ἔχοντες*; exactly resembling the modern Italian singers: madam Dacier is not to be forgiven for passing over a remark of such importance; if this be true, it makes a great difference between the ancient and modern poets, and is the only advantage I know we have over them.

True to his charge, the bard preserv'd her long
 In honour's limits (such the pow'r of song)
 But when the gods these objects of their hate
 Dragg'd to destruction by the links of fate ;
 The bard they banish'd from his native foil, 340
 And left all helpless in a desert isle :
 There he, the sweetest of the sacred train,
 Sung dying to the rocks, but sung in vain.
 Then virtue was no more (her guard away)
 She fell, to lust a voluntary prey. 345
 Ev'n to the temple stalk'd th' adult'rous spouse,
 With impious thanks, and mockery of vows,

ψ. 344. *Then virtue was no more (her guard away)*
She fell, ———, etc.

There is a fine moral couched in the story of the bard and Clytemnestra ; it admirably paints the advantage we draw from wise companions for the improvement of our virtues : Clytemnestra was chaste because her instructor was wise : his wisdom was an insuperable guard to her modesty. It was long before she yielded ; virtue and honour had a long contest ; but she no sooner yielded to adultery, but she assisted in the murder of her husband ; from whence we may draw another moral, that one vice betrays us into another : and when once the fences of honour are thrown down, we become a prey to every passion. Dacier.

ψ. 346. *Ev'n to the temple stalk'd th' adult'rous spouse.]*
 Here is a surprising mixture of religion and impiety : Ægisthus, upon the accomplishment of so great a crime as adultery, returns thanks to the gods by oblations, as if they had assisted him in the execution of it. Nestor dwells upon it at large, to shew that Ægisthus great-

With images, with garments, and with gold,
And od'rous fumes from loaded altars roll'd.

Mean time from flaming Troy we cut the way, 350
With Menelaus, through the curling sea.

But when to Sunium's sacred point we came,
Crown'd with the temple of th' Athenian dame;
Atrides' pilot, Phrontes, there expir'd;
(Phrontes, of all the sons of men admir'd 355
To steer the bounding bark with stedd'ly toil,
When the storm thickens, and the billows boil)
While yet he exercis'd the steerman's art,
Apollo touch'd him with his gentle dart;

ly aggravated his guilt by such a piece of impious devotion. Dacier.

ŷ. 359. *Apollo touch'd him with his gentle dart.*] Homer calls the darts of Apollo ἀγὰν, or gentle; to signify that those who die thus suddenly, die without pain. Eustathius.

Dacier complains that some critics think Homer worthy of blame for enlarging upon so mean a person as a pilot. It is a sufficient answer to observe, that arts were in high esteem in those times, and men that were eminent in them were in great honour. Neither were arts then confined as in these ages to mean personages: no less a person than Ulysses builds a vessel in the sequel of the Odyssey; so that this is a false piece of delicacy. If Homer be culpable, so is Virgil; he gives the genealogy of Palinurus, as well as Homer of Phrontes. Virgil's description is censured as too long, Homer concludes his in seven lines; and lastly, Virgil's episode has been judged by the critics to be an unnecessary ornament, and to contribute nothing to the poem; Homer relates the death of Phrontes, to introduce the dis-

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Ev'n with the rudder in his hand, he fell. 360

To pay whose honours to the shades of hell,

We check'd our haste, by pious office bound,

And laid our old companion in the ground.

And now, the rites discharg'd, our course we keep

Far on the gloomy bosom of the deep : 365

Soon as Malaea's misty tops arise,

Sudden the thund'rer blackens all the skies,

And the winds whistle, and the surges roll

Mountains on mountains, and obscure the pole.

The tempest scatters, and divides our fleet ; 370

Part, the storm urges on the coast of Crete,

Where winding round the rich Cydonian plain,

The streams of Jordan issue to the main.

There stands a rock, high, eminent and steep,

Whose shaggy brow o'er-hangs the shady deep, 375

And views Gortyna on the western side ;

On this rough Auster drove th' impetuous tide :

With broken force the billows rowl'd away,

And heav'd the fleet into the neighb'ring bay.

person of the fleet of Menelaus ; the fleet might well be scattered, when it wanted so excellent a pilot.

ψ. 371. *Part, the storm urges on the coast of Crete.*] Homer does not amuse us by relating what became of these companions of Menelaus ; he omits this judiciously, and follows the thread of his story : Menelaus is the person whom the poet has in view ; he therefore passes over the story of his companions, to carry on the fable of the poem by leading us directly to Menelaus.

Thus sav'd from death they gain'd the Phæstian shores,
 With shatter'd vessels, and disabled oars : 381
 But five tall barks the winds and waters tost
 Far from their fellows, on th' Ægyptian coast.
 There wander'd Menelaus through foreign shores,
 Amassing gold, and gathering naval stores ; 385
 While curst Ægysthus the detested deed
 By fraud fulfill'd, and his great brother bled.
 Sev'n years, the traitor rich Mycenæ sway'd,
 And his stern rule the groaning land obey'd ;
 The eighth, from Athens to his realm restor'd, 390
 Orestes brandish'd the revenging sword,

ψ. 383. — *On th' Ægyptian coast.*] In the original it is, *The wind and water carry'd them to Ægyptus*. Homer by Ægyptus means the river Nile, and then it is always used in the masculine gender ; the region about it took its name from the river Ægyptus, this is always used in the feminine gender ; but the country had not received that name in the days of Homer. Eustathius.

What Dacier adds to this observation, may assist in determining the dispute concerning the priority of Homer and Hesiod : Hesiod makes mention of the river Nilus ; if therefore it be true that Ægyptus had not been called by the name of Nilus in the times of Homer, it is a demonstration that Hesiod was posterior to Homer ; otherwise he could not have been acquainted with any other name but that of Ægyptus.

ψ. 390. *From Athens to his realm* —] There is a different reading in this place : instead of ἀπ' Ἀθηνῶν, some write ἀπὸ Φωκῆς ; for Orestes was educated by Strophius king of Phocis, and father of Pylades : the ancients reconcile the difference, by saying that Orestes might be sent from Phocis to Athens for his education,

Slew the dire pair, and gave to fun'ral flame
The vile assassin, and adult'rous dame.

That day, ere yet the bloody triumphs cease,
Return'd Atrides to the coast of Greece, 395

And safe to Argos' port his navy brought,
With gifts of price and pond'rous treasure fraught.

Hence warn'd, my son beware ! nor idly stand
Too long a stranger to thy native land ;
Lest heedless absence wear thy wealth away, 400

While lawless feasters in thy palace sway ;
Perhaps may seize thy realm, and share the spoil ;
And thou return, with disappointed toil, }
From thy vain journey, to a rifled isle.

Howe'er, my friend, indulge one labour more, 405
And seek Atrides on the Spartan shore.

He, wand'ring long, a wider circle made,
And many languag'd nations has survey'd ;
And measur'd tracts unknown to other ships,
Amid the monstrous wonders of the deeps ; 410

(A length of ocean and unbounded sky,
Which scarce the sea-fowl in a year o'erfly)

and returning thence to his own country, might re-
venge the death of his father Agamemnon ; so that al-
though he was first bred up in Phocis, he was afterwards
a sojourner in Athens. Eustathius.

ψ. 411. *A length of ocean and unbounded sky,
Which scarce the sea-fowl in a year o'erfly.*]

It must be confess'd, that Nestor greatly exaggerates this
description : Homer himself tells us, that a ship may
sail in five days from Crete to Ægypt ; wherefore then

Go then ; to Sparta take the watry way,
 Thy ship and sailors but for orders stay ;
 Or if by land thou chuse thy course to bend, 415
 My steeds, my chariots, and my sons attend ;
 Thee to Atrides they shall safe convey,
 Guides of thy road, companions of thy way.
 Urge him with truth to frame his free replies,
 And sure he will : for Menelaus is wise. 420

Thus while he speaks, the ruddy sun descends,
 And twilight grey her ev'ning shade extends.
 Then thus the blue-ey'd maid : O full of days !
 Wise are thy words, and just are all thy ways.

this hyperbole of Nestor ? It might perhaps be to deter Telemachus from a design of sailing to Crete, and he through his inexperience might believe the description. It may be added, that what Nestor speaks concerning the flight of birds, may be only said to shew the great distance of that sea : nay, by a favourable interpretation it may be reconciled to truth ; the meaning then must be this : should a person observe that sea a whole year, he would not see one bird flying over it, both because of the vastness and dreadfulness of it ; and perhaps the whole of this might arise from the observation, that this sea is not frequented by birds. This is wholly and almost literally taken from Eustathius ; and if we add to this the ignorance of the sea and sea-affairs in those ages, we shall the less wonder to hear so wise a man as Nestor describing it with so much terror ; navigation is now greatly improved, and the moderns sail farther in a month, than the antients could in a year ; their whole art consisting chiefly in coasting along the shores, and consequently they made but little way.

Now immolate the tongues, and mix the wine, 425
Sacred to Neptune and the Pow'rs divine.

415

The lamp of day is quench'd beneath the deep,
And soft approach the balmy hours of sleep :
Nor fits it to prolong the heav'nly feast,
Timeless, indecent, but retire to rest. 430

420

ψ. 425. *Now immolate the tongues*—] Various are the reasons which Eustathius reports concerning this oblation of the tongues at the conclusion of the sacrifice. It was to purge themselves from any evil words they might have uttered ; or because the tongue was reckoned the best part of the sacrifice, and so reserved for the completion of it ; or they offered the tongue to the gods, as witnesses to what they had spoken. I omit the rest as superfluous. They had a custom of offering the tongues to Mercury, because they believed him the giver of eloquence. Dacier expatiates upon this custom. The people, says she, might fear, lest through wine and the joy of the festival they might have uttered some words unbecoming the sanctity of the occasion : by this sacrifice of the tongues, they signified that they purged away whatever they had spoken amiss during the festival ; and asked, in particular, pardon of Mercury, who presided over discourse, to the end they might not carry home any uncleanness which might stop the blessings expected from the sacrifice.

ψ. 429. *Nor fits it to prolong the heav'nly feast,*
Timeless, indecent, etc.]

Eustathius shews the difference between *εορται*, festivals, and *θυσιαί*, or sacrifices : in the former it was customary to spend the whole night in wine and rejoicing : in the latter, this was reckoned an unlawful custom, through the fear of falling into any indecencies through wine. He likewise gives another reason of this injunction, by telling us that it was the custom to offer sacrifices to

So spake Jove's daughter, the celestial maid.
 The sober train attended and obey'd.
 The sacred heralds on their hands around
 Pour'd the full urns ; the youths the goblets crown'd :
 From bowl to bowl the holy bev'rage flows ; 435
 While to the final sacrifice they rose.
 The tongues they cast upon the fragrant flame,
 And pour, above, the consecrated stream.
 And now, their thirst by copious draughts allay'd,
 The youthful hero and th' Athenian maid 440
 Propose departure from the finish'd rite,
 And in their hollow bark to pass the night :
 But this the hospitable sage deny'd.
 Forbid it, Jove ! and all the Gods ! he cry'd,
 Thus from my walls the much-lov'd son to send 445
 Of such a hero, and of such a friend !
 Me, as some needy peasant, would ye leave,
 Whom heav'n denies the blessing to relieve ?
 Me would ye leave, who boast imperial sway,
 When beds of royal state invite your stay ? 450

the celestial powers in the day, and even to finish them about the setting of the sun ; and that those who dealt in incantations performed their sacrifices to the infernal Powers by night, and finished them before sun-rising. Either of these reasons sufficiently explains the words of the goddess ; and the former carries in it an excellent moral, that particular care should be taken in our acts of devotion, not to turn religion into impiety.

ψ. 450. *When beds of royal state invite your stay ?*] This passage gives us a full insight into the manners of these

No — long as life this mortal shall inspire,
Or as my children imitate their fire,
Here shall the wand'ring stranger find his home,
And hospitable rites adorn the dome.

Well hast thou spoke, the blue-ey'd maid replies,
Belov'd old man ! benevolent, as wise. 456
Be the kind dictates of thy heart obey'd,
And let thy words Telemachus persuade :

hospitable ages; they not only kept a treasury for bowls or vases of gold or silver, to give as *ξενήσια*, or gifts of hospitality, but also a wardrobe of various habits and rich furniture, to lodge and bestow upon strangers. Eustathius relates, that Tellias of Agrigentum was a person of so great hospitality, that five hundred horsemen coming to his house in the winter season, he entertained them, and gave every man a cloke and a tunic. This laudable custom prevailed, and still prevails, in the eastern countries: it was the practice of Abraham of old, and is at this day among the Turks, as we may learn from their caravanfaries, erected for the reception of travellers. And yet Dacier observes, that a French critic has shew'd so ill a taste as to ridicule this passage. 'Telemachus, says that author, being entertained by Nestor, intimates his intention of returning to lodge on ship-board with his companions: but Nestor detains him, by asking if he thought he had not quilts or coverlets to give him a night's lodging: upon this Telemachus goes to bed in a resounding gallery, and Nestor in a bed which his wife made ready for him.' The noblest things are most liable to burlesque, by perverting their meaning; as some pictures, by varying the position, represent a man or a monster. He is very severe upon the *resounding gallery*, which in truth means no more than very lofty or elevated, and by consequence very noble and magnificent.

He to thy palace shall thy steps pursue ;
 I to the ship, to give the orders due,
 Prescribe directions, and confirm the crew.
 For I alone sustain their naval cares,
 Who boast experience from these silver hairs ;
 All youths the rest, whom to this journey move
 Like years, like tempers, and their prince's love. 465
 There in the vessel shall I pass the night ;
 And soon as morning paints the fields of light,
 I go to challenge from the Caucons bold,
 A debt, contracted in the days of old.

y. 468. *I go to challenge from the Caucons.*] The poet makes a double use of these words of the goddess ; she gives an air of probability to her excuse, why she should not be pressed to stay ; and at the same time Homer avoids the absurdity of introducing that goddess at Sparta. Menelaus, and Helen are celebrating the nuptials of their son and daughter : Minerva is a virgin deity, and consequently an enemy to all nuptial ceremonies. Eustathius.

But it may be necessary to observe who these Caucons are : we find in the tenth book the Caucons mentioned as auxiliaries to Troy : there Dolon says,

*The Carians, Caucons, the Pelasgian host,
 And Leleges encamp along the coast.*

Are these Caucons the same with those here mentioned ? Eustathius informs us that there was a people of Triphily, between Elis and Pylos, named Caucons : but Strabo says, that the whole race is now extinct, and that these here mentioned are of Dymaea, and take their name from the river Caucon : whereas those in the Iliad are Paphlagonians : they were a wandering nation,

But this thy guest, receiv'd with friendly care, 470
Let thy strong courfers swift to Sparta bear ;
Prepare thy chariot at the dawn of day,
And be thy son companion of his way.

Then turning with the word, Minerva flies,
And soars an eagle through the liquid skies. 475
Vision divine ! The throng'd spectators gaze
In holy wonder fixt, and still amaze.
But chief the rev'rend sage admir'd ; he took
The hand of young Telemachus, and spoke.

Oh happy youth ! and favour'd of the skies, 480
Distinguish'd care of guardian deities !

and consequently might be the same people originally,
and retain the same name in different countries.

ψ. 478. *But chief the rev'rend sage admir'd—*] It
may be asked why Nestor is in such a surprize at the dis-
covery of the goddess : it is evident from the Iliad, that
he had been no stranger to such intercourses of the dei-
ties ; nay, in this very book Nestor tells us, that Ulysses
injoyed almost the constant presence of Minerva ;
insomuch that Sophocles, the great imitator of Homer,
relates, that he knew the goddess by her voice, with-
out seeing her. Eustathius answers, that the wonder
of Nestor arose not from the discovery of that deity, but
that she should accompany so young a person as Tele-
machus : after her departure, the old man stood amaz-
ed, and looked upon that hero as some very extraordi-
nary person, whom, in such early years, the goddess of
war and wisdom had vouchsafed to attend. This in-
terpretation agrees perfectly with what Nestor speaks
to Telemachus.

ψ. 481. *Distinguish'd care of guardian deities.*] I
will take this opportunity to obviate an objection that

Whose early years for future worth engage,

No vulgar manhood, no ignoble age.

For lo ! none other of the court above

Than she, the daughter of almighty Jove, 485

may be made against all interposition of the gods in assisting the heroes of the *Odyssey*: it has been thought by some critics a disparagement to them to stand in continual need of such supernatural succour: if two persons were engaged in combat, and a third person should immediately step in to the assistance of one of the parties, and kill the adversary, would it not reflect upon the valour of his friend who was so weak as to want such assistance? Why, for instance, should Jupiter help *Æneas* to kill *Turnus*? Was not he brave enough to fight, and strong enough to conquer his enemy by his own prowess? and would not *Turnus* have killed *Æneas* with the same assistance? It is therefore a disparagement to the actors, thus continually to supply the defects of a hero, by the power of a deity.

But this is a false way of arguing, and from hence it might be inferred, that the love and favour of a deity serves only to make those whom he assists, and those who depend upon such assistance, appear weak, impotent, cowardly, and unworthy to be conquerors. Can any doubt arise whether the love and favour of a god be a disparagement or honour to those whom he favours? According to these critics, we should find the character of a perfect hero in an impious *Mezentius*, who acknowledges no God but his own arm and his own sword: it is true, the objection would be just, if the hero himself performed nothing of the action; or if when he were almost conquered by the superior valour of his enemy, he owed his life and victory to gods and miracles: but the hero always behaves himself in all his actions, as if he were to gain success without the assistance of the deity; and the presence of the gods is so order-

Pallas herself, the war-triumphant maid,
 Confest is thine, as once thy father's aid.
 So guide me, goddess ! so propitious shine
 On me, my consort, and my royal line !
 A yearling bullock to thy name shall smoke, 490
 Untam'd, unconscious of the galling yoke.
 With ample forehead, and yet tender horns,
 Whose budding honours ductile gold adorns.

ed, that we may retrench every thing that is miraculous, without making any alteration in the action or character of the human personages. Thus in the instance of Æneas and Turnus, though Jupiter favours Æneas, yet Æneas is painted in stronger colours of fortitude, he appears superior, as a man unassisted, and able to conquer Turnus ; and consequently the favour of Jupiter makes no alteration in the action or character of Æneas.

There is likewise a wide difference between the assistance of a man, and of a god : the actions of men belong only to the performers of those actions ; but when a deity assists us by inspiring us with strength and courage, the actions we perform are really our own, and the more he favours us, the more glory he gives us : so that the assistance of man eclipses, but the assistance of a god exalts, our glory. Thus, for instance, when Achilles is pursuing Hector, he charges the Greeks to keep off from Hector ; their assistance might lessen his glory : but when Pallas offers her assistance, he immediately imbraces it as a honour, and boasts of it as such to Hector. I have been large upon this objection, because the reader ought to carry it in his memory through the whole poem, and apply it to every action, in which any share is ascribed to any deity. See Bossu more at large concerning this objection.

Submissive thus the hoary fire prefer'd
 His holy vow : the fav'ring goddess heard. 495
 Then slowly rising, o'er the sandy space
 Precedes the father, follow'd by his race,
 (A long procession) timely marching home
 In comely order to the regal dome.
 There when arriv'd, on thrones around him plac'd, 500
 His sons and grand-sons the wide circle grac'd.
 To these the hospitable sage, in sign
 Of social welcome, mix'd the racy wine,
 (Late from the mellowing cask restor'd to light,
 By ten long years refin'd, and rosy-bright.) 505
 To Pallas high the foaming bowl he crown'd,
 And sprinkled large libation on the ground.
 Each drinks a full oblivion of his cares,
 And to the gifts of balmy sleep repairs.
 Deep in a rich alcove the prince was laid, 510
 And slept beneath the pompous colonnade ;
 Fast by his side Pisistratus lay spread,
 (In age his equal) on a splendid bed :
 But in an inner court, securely clos'd,
 The rev'rend Nestor with his queen repos'd. 515
 When now Aurora, daughter of the dawn,
 With rosy lustre purpled o'er the lawn ;
 The old man early rose, walk'd forth, and sate
 On polish'd stone before his palace gate :

v. 518. *And sate on polish'd stone before his palace gate.*
 We have here an antient custom recorded by the poet;

With unguents smooth the lucid marble shone, 520

Where antient Neleus sat, a rustic throne ;

But he descending to th' infernal shade,

Sage Nestor fill'd it, and the sceptre sway'd.

His sons around him mild obeysance pay,

And duteous take the orders of the day. 525

First Echephron and Stratius quit their bed ;

Then Perseus, Aretus, and Thrasymed ;

The last Pisistratus arose from rest :

They came, and near him plac'd the stranger guest.

a king places himself before the gate of his palace upon a seat of marble, worn smooth by long use, says Eustathius, or perhaps smoothed exquisitely by the hand of the workman. What I would chiefly observe is, that they placed themselves thus in the public for the dispatch of justice : we read in the scripture of judges *sitting in the gate* ; and that this procedure of Nestor was for that purpose is probable from the expression, *He sat in the seat where Neleus* [*μῆτορ, or consiliarius,*] *used to sit,* (which seems to express his wisdom in the discharge of justice.) Nestor is also described as bearing his sceptre in his hand, which was never used but upon some act of regality, in the dispatch of justice, or other solemn occasions. Perhaps, says Dacier, these seats or thrones might be consecrated with oil, to draw a reverence to the seats of justice as by an act of religion ; but I rather judge, adds she, that no more is meant than to express the shining of these thrones, they being undoubtedly made of marble.

ψ. 528. *Pisistratus.*] Would I indulge my fancy in a conjecture, I might suppose that the famous tyrant Pyisistratus was descended, or borrowed his name from this son of Nestor. Herodotus informs us, as Eustathius observes, that all the Pisistrati were originally Pylians. If this be true, we have a very strong evidence

To these the senior thus declar'd his will : 530

My sons ! the dictates of your fire fulfil.

To Pallas first of gods, prepare the feast,

Who grac'd our rites, a more than mortal guest.

Let one, dispatchful, bid some swain to lead

A well fed bullock from the grassy mead ; 535

One seek the harbour where the vessels moor,

And bring thy friends, Telemachus ! ashore,

(Leave only two the gally to attend)

Another to Laerceus must we send,

Artist divine, whose skilful hands infold 540

The victim's horn with circumfused gold.

that Homer is not all fiction, but that he celebrates the great men of those ages with reality, and only embellishes the true story with the ornaments of poetry.

ψ. 540. *Laerceus—Artist divine, etc.*] The author of the Parallel quotes this passage to prove that Homer was ignorant of the mechanic arts : we have here, says he, a gilder with his anvil and hammer ; but what occasion has he for an anvil and hammer in the art of a gilder ? Boileau has excellently vindicated Homer from this objection, in his reflections upon Longinus ; this gilder was a gold-beater : Nestor, we see, furnished the gold, and he beat it into leaves, so that he had occasion to make use of his anvil and hammer ; the anvil was portable, because the work was not laborious. Our modern travellers assure us, that it is at this day the practice in the eastern regions, as in Persia, etc. for the artists in metals to carry about with them the whole implements of trade, to the house of the persons where they find employment ; it is therefore a full vindication of Homer, to observe that the gold this artist used in gilding, was nothing but gold beat into fine leaves.

The rest may here the pious duty share,
 And bid the handmaids for the feast prepare,
 The seats to range, the fragrant wood to bring,
 And limpid waters from the living spring. 545

He said, and busy each his care bestow'd;
 Already at the gates the bullock low'd,
 Already came the Ithacensian crew,
 The dextrous smith the tools already drew:
 His pond'rous hammer, and his anvil sound, * 550
 And the strong tongs to turn the metal round.
 Nor was Minerva absent from the rite,
 She view'd her honours, and enjoy'd the sight.

ψ. 552. *Nor was Minerva absent*—] It may be asked in what sense Minerva can be said to come to the sacrifice? Eustathius answers, that the ancients, finding the inclinations of men to be bent incontinently upon pleasures, to oblige them to use them moderately, distinguished times, ordained sacrifices, and representing the gods in the forms of men, brought them to use those pleasures with discretion: they taught them that the gods came down to their libations and sacrifices, to induce them to govern their conversation with reverence and modesty: thus Jupiter, and the other gods in the Iliads, and Neptune in the Odyssey, are said to feast with the Æthiopians.

If I might be pardoned a conjecture, I would suppose, that Minerva may, in another sense, be said to come to the sacrifice; I mean, by her image or statue: and what may seem to confirm this opinion, is what Diodorus relates in his third book concerning the abovementioned Æthiopians; they carried about the statues of Jupiter, and the other gods, twelve days, during which time, the gods were said to be gone to the Æthiopians:

With rev'rent hand the king presents the gold,
 Which round th' intorted horns the gilder roll'd;
 So wrought, as Pallas might with pride behold.
 Young Aretus from forth his bridal bow'r
 Brought the full laver, o'er their hands to pour,
 And canisters of consecrated flour.

Stratius and Echephron the victim led ; 560
 The ax was held by warlike Thrasymed,
 In act to strike : before him Perseus stood,
 The vase extending to receive the blood.

and if the gods may be said to come to the Æthiopians by their statues, why may not the same be said of Minerva, from the introduction of her statue among the Pylians ? So that the appearance of the goddess may possibly mean the appearance of her statue.

ψ. 560. *Stratius and Echephron, etc.*] Nestor here makes use only of the ministry of his sons ; the reason of it is, because it was reckoned honourable to serve in the performance of sacrifice, this being in some sense an attending upon the gods : or because it was the practice of those ages for great persons to do those offices with their own hands, which in the latter have been performed by servants.

Eustathius reports a saying of Antigonus, who observing his son behave himself imperiously to his subjects, ' Knowest thou not, says he, that royalty itself is but ' illustrious servitude ! ' an intimation that he himself was but a servant of the public, and therefore should use his servants with moderation.

But the true reason of Nestor's assisting in the sacrifice is, because kings anciently had the inspection of religion, and priesthood was joined to royalty, according to that of Virgil,

Rex Anius, rex idem hominum Phœbique sacerdos.

The king himself initiates to the pow'r;
 Scatters with quiv'ring hand the sacred flour, 565
 And the stream sprinkles : from the curling brows
 The hair collected in the fire he throws.
 Soon as due vows on ev'ry part were pay'd,
 And sacred wheat upon the victim lay'd,
 Strong Thrasymed discharg'd the speeding blow 570
 Full on his neck, and cut the nerves in two.
 Down sunk the heavy beast : the females round
 Maids, wives, and matrons, mix a shrilling sound.
 Nor scorn'd the queen the holy choir to join,
 (The first born she, of old Clymenus' line; 575

ψ. 573. *Maids, wives, and matrons, mix a shrilling sound.*] I have kept the meaning of the word in the original, which signifies prayers made with loud cries, ὀλολύξαν. ὀλολύξῃ, says Hesychius, is, φωνὴ γυναικῶν ἢν ποιῶνται ἐν τοῖς ἱεροῖς εὐχόμεναι, the voice of women, which they make at their sacrifices in their prayers. But there is still something in it more to the present purpose; the scholiast upon Æschylus remarks, that this word is not used properly but when applied to the prayers offered to Minerva; for Minerva is the only goddess to whom prayers are made with loud cries, she being the goddess of war; to other deities they offer prayer with thanksgiving; ἔ γὰρ μόνῃ τῇ Ἀθηνᾷ δαίμονι ὕσῃ πολεμικῇ ὀλολύξουσιν, τοῖς δ' ἄλλοις θεοῖς παίωνίζουσιν.

Thus also in the sixth book of the Iliads, verse 301.

Αἶ δ' ὀλολυγῇ παῖται Ἀθήνη χεῖρας ἀνίσχον.

They fill the dome with supplicating cries.

And in the present passage in the Odyssey,

----- αἶ δ' ὀλολύξαν

Θυγαῖρες τε, υιοί τε, etc.

Dacier.

In youth by Nestor lov'd, of spotless fame,
 And lov'd in age, Eurydice her name)
 From earth they rear him, struggling now with death ;
 And Nestor's youngest stops the vents of breath.
 The soul for ever flies : on all sides round 580
 Streams the black blood, and smokes upon the ground.
 The beast they then divide, and dis-unite
 The ribs and limbs, observant of the rite :
 On these, in double cawls involv'd with art,
 The choicest morsels lay from ev'ry part. 585
 The sacred sage before his altar stands,
 Turns the burnt-off'ring with his holy hands,
 And pours the wine, and bids the flames aspire :
 The youth with instruments surround the fire.
 The thighs now sacrific'd, and entrails drest, 590
 Th' assistants part, tranfix, and broil the rest.
 While these officious tend the rites divine,
 The last fair branch of the Nestorian line
 Sweet Polycaste, took the pleasing toil
 To bathe the prince, and pour the fragrant oil. 595

*v. 594. Sweet Polycaste, took the pleasing toil
 To bathe the prince, etc.]*

It is very necessary to say something about this practice
 of women bathing and anointing men ; it frequently
 occurs through the whole Odyssey, and is so contrary
 to the usage of the moderns, as to give offence to mo-
 desty ; neither is this done by women of inferior qua-
 lity, but we have here a young princess, bathing, anoint-
 ing, and cloathing the naked Telemachus. Eustathius
 indeed tells us, it was undoubtedly by her father's com-

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O'er his fair limbs a flow'ry vest he threw,
 And issu'd, like a god, to mortal view.
 His former seat beside the king he found,
 (His people's father with his peers around)
 All plac'd at ease the holy banquet join, 600
 And in the dazzling goblet laughs the wine.

The rage of thirst and hunger now suppress,
 The monarch turns him to his royal guest ;
 And for the promis'd journey bids prepare
 The smooth-hair'd horses, and the rapid car, 605
 Observant of his word. The word scarce spoke,
 The sons obey, and join them to the yoke.
 Then bread and wine a ready handmaid brings,
 And presents, such as suit the state of kings.
 The glitt'ring seat Telemachus ascends ; 610
 His faithful guide Pisistratus attends :

mand : but if it was a piece of immodesty, it does not solve the objection, whoever commanded it. I confess it would be immodest in these ages of the world, and the only excuse that occurs to me is, to say that custom established it. It is in manners, in some degree, as in dress ; if a fashion never so indecent prevails, yet no person is ridiculous, because it is fashionable : so in manners, if a practice prevails universally, though not reconcilable to real modesty, yet no person can be said to be immodest who comes into it, because it is agreeable to the custom of the times and countries.

Y. 610, etc. *The conclusion of the book.*] I shall lay together what I have further to observe on the conclusion of this book : it is remarkable, that the poet does not amuse himself in describing the present he received from Nestor, or the provisions for the journey, or even

With hasty hand the ruling reins he drew :
 He lash'd the courfers, and the courfers flew.
 Beneath the bounding yoke alike they held
 Their equal pace, and smoak'd along the field.
 The tow'rs of Pylos sink, its views decay,
 Fields after fields fly back, till close of day :
 Then sunk the sun, and darken'd all the way.

615

}

To Pherae now, Diocleus' stately seat,
 (Of Alpheus' race) the weary youths retreat.
 His house affords the hospitable rite,
 And pleas'd they sleep (the blessing of the night.)

620

the journey itself at large ; he dispatches the whole in a few lines very judiciously ; he carries his hero directly to Menelaus, who is to furnish many incidents that contribute to the design of the poem, and passes over other matters as unnecessary.

We have here likewise a piece of poetical geography, and learn that it is exactly two days journey from Pyle to Lacedaemon.

This book takes up three days ; the first is spent in the inquiries Telemachus makes of Nestor concerning Ulysses ; the two last in the morning sacrifice at Pylos, and in the journey of Telemachus to Lacedaemon ; so that five days have now passed since the opening of the poem. I have said nothing about the sacrifice, though it be the most exact description of the sacrifices, as practised by the ancients, perhaps extant in any author ; I refer to the observations upon the first book of the Iliad.

I would here remark that the three first books are written with the utmost simplicity ; there has been no room for such exalted strokes of poetry as are to be found in the Iliad, or in the future parts of the Odyssey : But this is not owing to the decay of genius in Homer,

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Book III. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 167

But when Aurora, daughter of the dawn,
With rosy lustre purpled o'er the lawn;
Again they mount, their journey to renew, 625
And from the sounding portico they flew.
Along the waving fields their way they hold,
The fields receding as the chariot roll'd :
Then slowly sunk the ruddy globe of light,
And o'er the shaded landscape rush'd the night. 630

as some critics have affirmed, (who look upon the *Odyssey* as bearing marks of his declining years,) but to the nature of the subject. The characters of Achilles and Ulysses are both very great, but very different. The *Iliad* consists of battles, and a continual commotion; the *Odyssey* in patience and wisdom: and consequently the stile of the two poems must be as different as the characters of the two heroes. A noble fountain of poetry opens in the next book, and flows with an uninterrupted course almost through the whole *Odyssey*.

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T H E
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T H E A R G U M E N T.

The conference with Menelaus.

Telemachus with Pisistratus arriving at Sparta, is hospitably received by Menelaus, to whom he relates the cause of his coming, and learns from him many particulars of what befel the Greeks since the destruction of Troy. He dwells more at large upon the prophecies of Proteus to him in his return, from which he acquaints Telemachus, that Ulysses is detained in the island of Calypso.

In the mean time the suitors consult to destroy Telemachus in his voyage home. Penelope is apprized of this, but comforted in a dream by Pallas, in the shape of her sister Iphima.

AND now proud Sparta with their wheels resounds,
Sparta whose walls a range of hills surrounds :
At the fair dome the rapid labour ends ;
Where sat Atrides 'midst his bridal friends,

Aristotle in his Poetics reports, that certain antient critics reproached Homer for an indecency in making Telemachus take his abode with Menelaus, and not with his own grandfather Icarius : this monsieur Dacier sufficiently answers, by shewing that Icarius had settled himself in Acarnania, and not in Lacedaemon.

With double vows invoking Hymen's pow'r, 5
To bless his sons and daughters nuptial hour.

ψ. 5. — *invoking Hymen's pow'r.*] Athenaeus has been very severe upon this passage, as Eustathius observes, and Dacier from Eustathius.

Aristarchus, says Athenaeus, misguides us, the words τὸν δ' εὔρον δαινύντα led him into an error; whereas the marriage is completed, the wedded couple gone away from Menelaus, and he and Helen at Lacedaemon. The five verses, continues he (the fifteenth to the twentieth inclusively) are taken from the eighteenth book of the Iliads, and inserted very improperly in this place by Aristarchus. Athenaeus gives several reasons for his opinion, as that music and dancing were very contrary to the severe manners of the Lacedaemonians; besides, the dance was a Cretan dance, how then could it be practised among the Spartans? The poet mentions neither the name of the bard, nor one word of the subject of the songs: neither can the words *μολπῆς ἑξάρχοντες* be applied at all to the dancers, but to the musicians; and lastly, it is not to be imagined, that Telemachus and Pisistratus should be so unpolite, as not to be at all affected with the music, had there been any, and yet break out into such wonder at the sight of the beauty of the palace of Menelaus. Aristarchus, adds he, thought the description of the wedding of the son and daughter of a king was too meanly and concisely described, and therefore made this addition.

But it is easy to refute Athenaeus, and vindicate Aristarchus. Athenaeus understood *πέμπε* and *ἔγχε* in the wrong tense; they are of the imperfect, *he was sending, or about to send*, and not *had sent*, etc. If the marriage had been absolutely finished, why should Minerva absent herself from Menelaus, when the celebration of the nuptials is the only reason of the absence of that goddess? and as for music and dancing being contrary to the se-

That day, to great Achilles' son resign'd
Hermione, (the fairest of her kind)

vere manners of the Lacedaemonians, this is all conjecture : Menelaus lived more than three hundred years before Lycurgus ; and because such diversions were forbid in Sparta, in the days of Lycurgus, must it follow, that they were not used in those of Menelaus ? And should it be granted that music and dancing were not used in his times, might he not relax a little from the severity of his times, upon such an occasion of joy as the marriage of a son and daughter ? I am sure these diversions are not more contrary to the severity of the Spartans, than the magnificence of the palace of Menelaus was to their simplicity. ' But he does not name ' the bard, or the subject of his songs.' But is this a reason why the verses are spurious ? we should rather admire the judgment of the poet, who, having so fair an opportunity to describe these nuptials, yet rejects the temptation, dismisses the whole in a few lines, and follows where this subject leads him. The objection about the dance being Cretan is not more valid : Menelaus, as we may learn from the preceding book, had been in Crete, and might bring it thence to Lacedaemon. And as for the criticism upon ἱεραρχοντες, it is but a fallacy ; Casaubon has shewn, beyond contradiction, that ἱεραρχειν is applied indifferently to all those who give example to others ; and consequently may be applied to dancers as well as musicians. It may be further added, that although it should be allowed, that the word ἱεραρχειν is only properly applied to music, yet in this place the word would not be improperly applied to dancers ; for the dancers, without usurping upon the province of the singer might μολπῆς ἱεραρχειν, or chuse those songs, to which they desired to dance, as is the usage at this day.

Diodorus is of opinion, that the whole twelve lines after the second to the fifteenth are not genuine ; but

Was sent to crown the long-protracted joy,
Espous'd before the final doom of Troy : 10

With steeds and gilded cars, a gorgeous train
Attend the nymph to Phthia's distant reign.

Mean-while at home, to Megapenthes' bed
The virgin-choir Alector's daughter led.

Brave Megapenthes, from a stol'n amour 15

To great Atrides' age his hand-maid bore :

To Helen's bed the gods alone assign

Hermione, t' extend the regal line ;

On whom a radiant pomp of Graces wait,
Resembling Venus in attractive state. 20

While this gay friendly troop the king surround,
With festival and mirth the roofs resound :

A bard amid the joyous circle sings

High airs, attemper'd to the vocal strings ;

Whilst warbling to the varied strain, advance 25

Two sprightly youths to form the bounding dance.

'Twas then, that issuing through the palace gate

The splendid car roll'd slow in regal state :

On the bright eminence young Nestor shone,

And fast beside him great Ulysses' son : 30

Grave Eteoneus saw the pomp appear,

And speeding, thus address'd the royal ear.

Two youths approach, whose semblant features prove
Their blood devolving from the source of Jove.

what has been said of Athenaeus, may be applied to
Diodorus.

Book IV. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 173

Is due reception deign'd, or must they bend 35

Their doubtful course to seek a distant friend ?

Insenate ! with a sigh the king replies,

Too long, mis-judging, have I thought thee wise :

But sure relentless folly steels thy breast,

Obdurate to reject the stranger-guest ; 40

To those dear hospitable rites a foe,

Which in my wand'rings oft reliev'd my woe :

Fed by the bounty of another's board,

'Till pitying Jove my native realm restor'd —

Strait be the coursers from the car releas'd, 45

Conduct the youths to grace the genial feast.

The seneschal rebuk'd in haste withdrew ;

With equal haste a menial train pursue :

Part led the coursers, from the car enlarg'd,

Each to a crib with choicest grain surcharg'd ; 50

Part in a portico, profusely grac'd

With rich magnificence, the chariot plac'd :

ψ. 37. *Menelaus blames Eteoneus.*] This is the first appearance of Menelaus ; and surely nothing can more reconcile him to the favour of the spectators, than those amiable colours in which the poet paints him. There is an overflow of humanity and gratitude in his expressions, like that of Dido in Virgil,

Non ignara mali miseris succurrere disco.

They contain a fine piece of morality, and teach that those men are more tender-hearted and humane who have felt the reverse of fortune, than those who have only lived in a condition of prosperity.

Then to the dome the friendly pair invite,
 Who eye the dazling roofs with vast delight;
 Resplendent as the blaze of summer-noon, 55
 Or the pale radiance of the midnight moon.
 From room to room their eager view they bend;
 Thence to the bath, a beauteous pile, descend;
 Where a bright damsel-train attend the guests
 With liquid odours, and embroider'd vests. 60
 Refresh'd, they wait them to the bow'r of state,
 Where circled with his peers Atrides sate:
 Thron'd next the king, a fair attendant brings
 The purest product of the chrystal springs:
 High on a massy vase of silver mold, 65
 The burnish'd laver flames with solid gold:
 In solid gold the purple vintage flows,
 And on the board a second banquet rose.
 When thus the king with hospitable port:—
 Accept this welcome to the Spartan court; 70
 The waste of nature let the feast repair,
 Then your high lineage and your names declare:
 Say from what scepter'd ancestry ye claim,
 Recorded eminent in deathless fame?
 For vulgar parents cannot stamp their race 75
 With signatures of such majestic grace.
 Ceasing, benevolent he strait assigns
 The royal portion of the choicest chimes
 To each accepted friend: with grateful haste
 They share the honours of the rich repast. 80

Suffic'd, soft whispering thus to Nestor's son,
His head reclin'd, young Ithacus begun.

View'st thou unmov'd, O ever-honour'd most !
These prodigies of art, and wond'rous cost !

Above, beneath, around the palace shines 85

The sumless treasure of exhausted mines :

The spoils of elephants the roofs inlay,

And studded amber darts a golden ray :

Such, and not nobler, in the realms above

My wonder dictates is the dome of Jove. 90

The monarch took the word, and grave reply'd.

Presumptuous are the vaunts, and vain the pride

ψ. 81. *Soft-whispering thus to Nestor's son.*] This may be thought a circumstance of no importance, and very trivial in Telemachus ; but it shews his address and decency : he whispers, to avoid the appearance of a flatterer, or to conceal his own inexperience, in shewing too much surprize at the magnificence of the palace of Menelaus. Eustathius.

ψ. 91. *The monarch took the word, etc.*] The anti-ents, says Eustathius, observe the prudence of Menelaus, in his reply to Telemachus ; and the prudence of Telemachus in his behaviour to Menelaus : Menelaus denies not his riches and magnificence, but to take off the envy which they might attract, he throws the calamities he has undergone into the contrary scale, and balances his felicity with his misfortunes : and Telemachus coming into the palace at the time of an entertainment, chuses to satisfy his curiosity rather than his appetite. Plutarch, I confess, condemns Telemachus of inexperience ; who, when he saw the palace of Nestor furnished only with things useful to life, as beds, tables, etc. is seized with no admiration ; but the super-

Of man, who dares in pomp with Jove contest,
 Unchang'd, immortal, and supremely blest !
 With all my affluence when my woes are weigh'd, 95
 Envy will own, the purchase dearly paid.
 For eight slow-circling years by tempests tost,
 From Cyprus to the far Phœnician coast,
 (Sidon the capital) I stretch'd my toil
 Through regions fatten'd with the flows of Nile. 100
 Next, Æthiopia's utmost bound explore,
 And the parch'd borders of th' Arabian shore :

fluties of Menelaus, his ivory, amber, and gold, etc. carry him into transports : whereas a Socrates or a Diogenes would have exclaimed, What heaps of vanities have I beheld ! It is true, such a judgment might become philosophers ; but who, as Dacier observes, can think the character of a Socrates, or a Diogenes, suitable to young Telemachus ? What is decent in a prince, and a young man, would ill become the gravity and wisdom of a philosopher.

ψ. 100. *Through regions fatten'd with the flows of Nile.*
Next Æthiopia, etc.

The words are in the original Αἰγυπλίῃς ἱπαλήθῃς; others read them Αἰγυπλίῃς ἱπ' ἀληθείας, from their veracity in oracles, for which they were very famous ; and indeed the word ἱπαλήθῃς is not necessary, it being used in the very same sentence, though it must be confessed such repetitions are frequent in Homer. There is also a different reading of the word ἱπέρμυς; some have it ἱρέμυς, or blacks; others, Ζιδονίῃς Ἀριβαῖος τε; but the common reading is thought the best. The Erembi are the Arabian Troglodytes. Strabo informs us, that in former ages the bounds of the Æthiopians lay near to Thebes in Ægypt, so that Menelaus travelling to Thebes, might with ease visit the Æthiopians. Others have, without

Then warp my voyage on the southern gales,
 O'er the warm Lybian wave to spread my sails :
 That happy clime ! where each revolving year 105
 The teeming ewes a triple offspring bear ;
 And two fair crescents of translucent horn
 The brows of all their young increase adorn :

any foundation, imagined that he passed the streights of Gibraltar, and sailed to the Indies. Sidon is the capital of the Phoenicians. Eustathius.

ψ. 105. ——— *Where each revolving year
 The teeming ewes, etc.]*

These sheep, as described by Homer, may be thought the creation of the poet, and not the production of nature : but Herodotus, says Eustathius, writes, that in Scythia the oxen have no horns through the extremity of the cold : he quotes this very verse, rightly intimating, adds Herodotus, that in hot regions the horns of cattle shoot very speedily. Aristotle directly asserts, that in Lybia the young ones of horned cattle have horns immediately after they are brought into the world. So that Aristotle and Herodotus vindicate Homer. The poet adds, that the sheep breed three times in the year ; these words may have a different interpretation, and imply that they breed in three seasons of the year, and not only in the spring, as in other countries ; or that the sheep have at once three lambs ; but the first is the better interpretation. Athenæus upon this passage writes, that there are things in other countries no less strange than what Homer relates of these sheep of Libya. Thus in Lusitania, a country of Spain, now Portugal, there is a wonderful fruitfulness in all cattle, by reason of the excellent temper of the air ; the fruits there never rot, and the roses, violets, and asparagus, never fail above three months in the year. Eustathius.

The shepherd swains with sure abundance blest,
 On the fat flock and rural dainties feast ; 110
 Nor want of herbage makes the dairy fail,
 But every season fills the foaming pail.
 Whilst heaping unwish'd wealth, I distant roam ;
 The best of brothers, at his natal home,
 By the dire fury of a traitress wife, 115
 Ends the sad evening of a stormy life :
 Whence with incessant grief my soul annoy'd,
 These riches are possess'd, but not enjoy'd !

ψ. 114. *The best of brothers, ———
 ——— a traitress wife.]*

Menelaus neither mentions Agamemnon, Clytemnestra, nor Ægythus by name ; a just indignation and resentment is the occasion of his suppressing the names of Clytemnestra and Ægythus. Through the whole Iliad Menelaus is described as a very affectionate brother, and the love he bears Agamemnon is the reason why he passes by his name in silence. We see that he dispatches the whole in one verse and a half ; Nestor had told the story pretty largely in the preceding book, and as he was a person less nearly concerned, might speak of it with more ease and better temper than Menelaus ; the poet avoids a needless repetition, and a repetition too of a story universally known to all the Greeks. The death of Agamemnon is distributed into four places in the Odyssey ; Nestor, Menelaus, Proteus, and the shade of Agamemnon in the 11th book, all relate it, and every one very properly. Proteus as a prophet more fully than Nestor and Menelaus, and Agamemnon more fully than them all, as being best acquainted with it.

Eustathius,

Book IV. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 179

My wars, the copious theme of ev'ry tongue,
 To you, your fathers have recorded long: 120
 How fav'ring heav'n repaid my glorious toils
 With a sack'd palace, and barbaric spoils.
 Oh! had the gods so large a boon deny'd,
 And life, the just equivalent, supply'd
 To those brave warriors, who with glory fir'd, 125
 Far from their country in my cause expir'd!
 Still in short intervals of pleasing woe,
 Regardful of the friendly dues I owe,

y. 119. *My wars the copious theme, etc.*] In the original Menelaus says, *I have destroyed a house*, etc. There is an ambiguity in the expression, as Eustathius observes: for it may either signify the *house of Priam*, or his own in Argos; if it be understood of his own, then the meaning is, 'I have indeed great wealth, but have purchased it with the loss of my people; I could be content with the third part of it, if I could restore those to life who have perished before Troy.' If it be understood of the kingdom of Priam, the regret he shews will still appear the greater. He is enumerating his domestic happiness, and his foreign conquest of Troy; but he throws the destruction of so many brave men who fell before it, in the contrary scale; and it so far outweighs both his wealth and his glory, that they both are joyless to him. Either of these interpretations shew an excellent temper of humanity in Menelaus, who thinks the effusion of blood too dear a price for glory. At the same time the poet gives an admirable picture of human nature, which is restless in the pursuit of what it miscalls happiness, and when in possession of it neglects it. But the disquiet of Menelaus arises not from inconstancy of temper, but wisdom; it shews that all happiness is unsatisfactory.

I to the glorious dead, for ever dear !

Indulge the tribute of a grateful tear. 130

But oh ! Ulysses—deeper than the rest

That sad idea wounds my anxious breast !

My heart bleeds fresh with agonizing pain ;

The bowl, and tasteful viands tempt in vain,

Nor sleep's soft pow'r can close my streaming eyes,

When imag'd to my soul his sorrows rise. 136

No peril in my cause he ceas'd to prove,

His labours equall'd only by my love :

And both alike to bitter fortune born,

For him, to suffer, and for me to mourn ! 140

Whether he wanders on some friendless coast,

Or glides in Stygian gloom a penfive ghost,

ψ. 131. *But oh ! Ulysses—*, etc.] It is with admirable address that the poet falls into his subject ; it is art, but it seems to be nature : this conduct has a double effect, it takes away all suspicion of flattery, for Menelaus is ignorant that the person with whom he discourses is Telemachus ; this gives him a manifest evidence of the love he bears to Ulysses ; the young man could not but be pleased with the praise of his father, and with the sincerity of it. It is also observable, that Menelaus builds his friendship for Ulysses upon a noble foundation ; I mean the sufferings which Ulysses underwent for his friend : Menelaus ascribes not their affection to any familiarity or intercourse of entertainments, but to a more sincere cause, to the hazards which brave men undertake for a friend. In short, the friendship of Menelaus and Ulysses is the friendship of heroes. Eustathius.

No fame reveals ; but doubtful of his doom,
 His good old fire with sorrow to the tomb
 Declines his trembling steps ; untimely care 145
 Withers the blooming vigour of his heir ;
 And the chaste partner of his bed and throne,
 Wastes all her widow'd hours in tender moan.

While thus pathetic to the prince he spoke,
 From the brave youth the streaming passion broke : 150
 Studious to veil the grief, in vain repress,
 His face he shrouded with his purple vest :
 The conscious monarch pierc'd the coy disguise,
 And view'd his filial love with vast surprize :
 Dubious to press the tender theme, or wait 155
 To hear the youth enquire his father's fate.

In this suspense bright Helen grac'd the room ;
 Before her breath'd a gale of rich perfume.

Y. 157. — *Bright Helen grac'd the room.*] Menelaus conjectured that the person he had entertained was the son of Ulysses, from the tears he shed at the name of his father, and from the resemblance there was between Ulysses and Telemachus ; it might therefore have been expected that Menelaus should immediately have acknowledged Telemachus, and not delayed a full discovery one moment, out of regard to his absent friend ; but Menelaus defers it upon a twofold account, to give some time to Telemachus to indulge his sorrow for his father, and recover himself from it, and also to avoid the repetition of a discovery upon the appearance of Helen, who would be curious to know the condition of the strangers.

It may be necessary to say something concerning He-

So moves, adorn'd with each attractive grace,
 The silver-shafted goddess of the chace ! 160
 The seat of majesty Adrasfe brings,
 With art illustrious, for the pomp of kings.
 To spread the pall beneath the regal chair
 Of softest woof, is bright Alcippe's care.
 A silver canister divinely wrought, 165
 In her soft hands the beauteous Phylo brought :
 To Sparta's queen of old the radiant vase
 Alcandra gave, a pledge of royal grace :

len, that fatal beauty that engaged Greece and Asia in arms ; she is drawn in the same colours in the *Odyssey* as in the *Iliad* ; it is a vicious character, but the colours are so admirably softened by the art of the poet, that we pardon her infidelity. Menelaus is an uncommon instance of conjugal affection, he forgives a wife who had been false to him, and receives her into a full degree of favour. But perhaps the reader might have been shocked at it, and prejudiced against Helen as a person that ought to be forgot, or have her name only mentioned to disgrace it : the poet therefore, to reconcile her to his reader, brings her in as a penitent, condemning her own infidelity in very strong expressions ; she shews true modesty, when she calls herself impudent, and by this conduct we are inclined, like Menelaus, to forgive her.

ψ. 161, etc. *Adrasfe, Alcippe, Helen's maids.*] It has been observed, that Helen has not the same attendants in the *Odyssey* as she had in the *Iliad* ; they perhaps might be Trojans, and consequently be left in their own country ; or rather it was an act of prudence in Menelaus, not to suffer those servants about her who had been her attendants and confidants in her infidelity. Eustathius.

Book IV. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 183

For Polybus her lord, (whose sovereign sway
The wealthy tribes of Pharian Thebes obey) 170

When to that court Atrides came, carest
With vast munificence th' imperial guest :
Two lavers from the richest ore refin'd,
With silver tripods, the kind host assign'd ;
And bounteous, from the royal treasure told 175

Ten equal talents of refulgent gold.
Alcandra, consort of his high command,
A golden distaff gave to Helen's hand ;
And that rich vase, with living sculpture wrought,
Which heap'd with wool the beauteous Phyllo brought :
The filken fleece impurpled for the loom, 181
Rival'd the hyacinth in vernal bloom.

The sovereign seat then Jove-born Helen pres'd,
And pleasing thus her sceptred lord address'd.

Who grace our palace now, that friendly pair, 185
Speak they their lineage, or their names declare ?

Uncertain of the truth, yet uncontroul'd
Hear me the bodings of my breast unfold.

With wonder rapt, on yonder cheek I trace
The feature of the Ulyssæan race : 190

Diffus'd o'er each resembling line appear,
In just similitude, the grace and air
Of young Telemachus ! the lovely boy,
Who bless'd Ulysses with a father's joy,

ψ. 192. ——— *The grace and air
Of young Telemachus !]*

It may seem strange that Helen should at first view re-

What time the Greeks combin'd their social arms, 195
T' avenge the stain of my ill-fated charms !

Just is thy thought, the King assenting cries,
Methinks Ulysses strikes my wond'rous eyes :
Full shines the father in the filial frame,
His port, his features, and his shape the same ; 200
Such quick regards his sparkling eyes bestow ;
Such wavy ringlets o'er his shoulders flow !
And when he heard the long disastrous store
Of cares, which in my cause Ulysses bore ;
Dismay'd, heart-wounded with paternal woes, 205
Above restraint the tide of sorrow rose :
Cautious to let the gushing grief appear,
His purple garment veil'd the falling tear.

See there confest, Pisistratus replies,
The genuine worth of Ithacus the wife ! 210
Of that heroic fire the youth is sprung,
But modest awe hath chain'd his tim'rous tongue.
Thy voice, O King ! with pleas'd attention heard,
Is like the dictates of a God rever'd.
With him at Nestor's high command I came, 215
Whose age I honour with a parent's name.

collect the features of Ulysses in Telemachus ; and that Menelaus, who was better acquainted with him, and his constant friend, should not make the same observation. But Athenaeus, to reconcile this to probability, says, that women are curious and skilful observers of the likenesses of children to parents, for one particular reason, that they may, upon finding any dissimilitude, have the pleasure of hinting at the unchastity of others.

Book IV. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 185

By adverse destiny constrain'd to sue
For counsel and redress, he sues to you.
Whatever ill the friendless orphan bears,
Bereav'd of parents in his infant years, 220
Still must the wrong'd Telemachus sustain,
If hopeful of your aid, he hopes in vain :
Assanc'd in your friendly pow'r alone,
The youth would vindicate the vacant throne.

Is Sparta blest, and these desiring eyes 225
View my friend's son ? (the King exulting cries)
Son of my friend, by glorious toils approv'd,
Whose sword was sacred to the man he lov'd :
Mirror of constant faith, rever'd, and mourn'd ! —
When Troy was ruin'd, had the chief return'd, 230
No Greek an equal space had e'er possess'd
Of dear affection, in my grateful breast.
I, to confirm the mutual joys we shar'd,
For his abode a capital prepar'd ;
Argos the seat of sovereign rule I chose ; 235
Fair in the plan the future palace rose,
Where my Ulysses and his race might reign,
And portion to his tribes the wide domain.

ψ. 234. *For his abode a capital prepar'd.*] The poet puts these words in the mouth of Menelaus, to express the sincerity of his friendship to Ulysses ; he intended him all advantage, and no detriment : we must therefore conclude, that Ulysses was still to retain his sovereignty over Ithaca, and only remove to Argos, to live with so sincere a friend as Menelaus. Eustathius.

To them my vassals had resign'd a soil,
 With teeming plenty to reward their toil. 240
 There with commutual zeal we both had strove
 In acts of dear benevolence, and love :
 Brothers in peace, not rivals in command,
 And death alone dissolv'd the friendly band !
 Some envious pow'r the blissful scene destroys ; 245
 Vanish'd are all the visionary joys :
 The soul of friendship to my hope is lost,
 Fated to wander from his natal coast !
 He ceas'd ; a gust of grief began to rise :
 Fast streams a tide from beauteous Helen's eyes ; 250
 Fast for the fire the filial sorrows flow ;
 The weeping monarch swells the mighty woe :

ψ. 249. — [*A gust of grief began to rise, etc.*] It has been observed through the Iliad, and may be observed through the whole Odyssey, that it was not a disgrace to the greatest heroes to shed tears; and indeed I cannot see why it should be an honour to any man, to be able to divest himself of human nature so far as to appear insensible upon the most affecting occasions. No man is born a stoic; it is art, not nature; tears are only a shame, when the cause from whence they flow is mean or vicious. Here Menelaus laments a friend, Telemachus a father, Pisistratus a brother: but from what cause arise the tears of Helen? It is to be remembered, that Helen is drawn in the softest colours in the Odyssey; the character of the adulteress is lost in that of the penitent; the name of Ulysses throws her into tears, because she is the occasion of all the sufferings of that brave man; the poet makes her the first in sorrow, as she is the cause of all their tears.

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Book IV. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 187

Thy cheek, Pisistratus, the tears bedew,
While pictur'd to thy mind appear'd in view
Thy martial brother *: on the Phrygian plain 255
Extended pale, by swarthy Memnon slain !
But silence soon the son of Nestor broke,
And melting with fraternal pity spoke.

Frequent, O King, was Nestor wont to raise
And charm attention, with thy copious praise: 260
To crown thy various gifts, the sage assign'd
The glory of a firm capacious mind :
With that superior attribute controul
This unavailing impotence of soul.
Let not your roof with echoing grief resound, 265
Now for the feast the friendly bowl is crown'd :

* Antilochus.

ψ. 265. *Let not your roof with echoing grief resound,
Now for the feast the friendly bowl is crown'd.]*

It may be asked why sorrow for the dead should be more unseasonable in the evening than the morning? Eustathius answers, lest others should look upon our evening tears as the effect of wine, and not of love to the dead.

*Intempestivus venit inter pocula fletus.
Nec lacrymas dulci fas est miscere falerno.*

I fancy there may be a more rational account given of this expression ; the time of feasting was ever looked upon as a time of joy and thanksgiving to the gods ; it bore a religious veneration among the antients, and consequently to shed tears when they should express their gratitude to the gods with joy, was esteemed a profanation.

But when from dewy shade emerging bright,
 Aurora streaks the sky with orient light,
 Let each deplore his dead: the rites of woe
 Are all, alas! the living can bestow: 270

O'er the congenial dust injoin'd to shear
 The graceful curl, and drop the tender tear.
 Then mingling in the mournful pomp with you,
 I'll pay my brother's ghost a warrior's due,
 And mourn the brave Antilochus, a name 275

Not unrecorded in the rolls of fame:
 With strength and speed superior form'd, in fight
 To face the foe, or intercept his flight:
 Too early snatch'd by fate ere known to me!

I boast a witness of his worth in thee. 280

Young and mature! the monarch thus rejoins,
 In thee renew'd the soul of Nestor shines:
 Form'd by the care of that consummate sage,
 In early bloom an oracle of age.
 When-e'er his influence Jove vouchsafes to show'r 285

To bless the natal, and the nuptial hour;
 From the great sire transmissive to the race,
 The boon devolving gives distinguish'd grace.
 Such, happy Nestor! was thy glorious doom;
 Around thee full of years, thy offspring bloom, 290
 Expert of arms, and prudent in debate;

The gifts of heaven to guard thy hoary state.
 But now let each becalm his troubled breast,
 Wash, and partake serene the friendly feast.

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Book IV. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 189

To move thy suit, Telemachus, delay, 295

'Till heav'n's revolving lamp restores the day.

He said, Asphalion swift the laver brings ;

Alternate all partake the grateful springs ;

Then from the rites of purity repair,

And with keen gust the sav'ry viands share. 300

Mean-time with genial joy to warm the soul,

Bright Helen mix'd a mirth-inspiring bowl :

γ. 302. *Bright Helen mix'd a mirth-inspiring bowl, etc.]*

The conjectures about this cordial of Helen have been almost infinite. Some take Nepenthes allegorically, to signify history, music, or philosophy. Plutarch, in the first of the Symposiasts, affirms it to be, discourse well suiting the present passions and conditions of the hearers. Macrobius is of the same opinion, *Delinimentum illud quod Helena vino miscuit, non herba fuit, non ex India succus, sed narrandi opportunitas, quae hospitem moeroris oblitam flexit ad gaudium.* What gave a foundation to this fiction of Homer, as Dacier observes, might be this. Diodorus writes, that in Ægypt, and chiefly at Heliopolis, the same with Thebes where Menelaus sojourned, as has been already observed, there lived women who boasted of certain potions, which not only made the unfortunate forget all their calamities, but drove away the most violent sallies of grief or anger. Eusebius directly affirms, that even in his time, the women of Diospolis were able to calm the rage of grief or anger by certain potions. Now, whether this be truth or fiction, it fully vindicates Homer, since a poet may make use of a prevailing, though false, opinion.

Milton mentions this Nepenthes in his excellent Masque of Comus.

——— Behold this cordial julep here,
That flames and dances in his crystal bounds !

'Temper'd with drugs of sov'reign use, t' assuage
The boiling bosom of tumultuous rage ;

*Not that Nepenthes which the wife of Thone
In Egypt gave to Jove-born Helena,
Is of such pow'r as this to stir up joy,
To life so friendly, or so cool to thirst.*

But that there may be something more than fiction in this is very probable, since the Ægyptians were so notoriously skilled in physic ; and particularly since this very Thon, or Thonis, or Thoon, is reported by the antients to have been the inventor of physic among the Ægyptians. The description of this Nepenthes agrees admirably with what we know of the qualities and effects of opium.

It is further said of Thon, that he was king of Canopus, and entertained Menelaus hospitably before he had seen Helen ; but afterwards falling in love with her, and offering violence, he was slain by Menelaus. From his name the Ægyptians gave the name of Thoth to the first month of their year, and also to a city the name of Thonis. Ælian writes, that Menelaus, when he travelled to the Æthiopians, committed Helen to the protection of Thonis ; that she fell in love with him, that Polydamna growing jealous confined her to the island Pharos, but gave her an herb to preserve her from the poison of serpents there frequent, which, from Helen, was called Helenium. Strabo writes, that at Canopus, on the mouth of Nile, there stands a city named Thonies, from king Thonis, who received Helen and Menelaus. Herodotus relates, that Thonis was governor of Canopus, that he represented the injury which Paras had done to Menelaus, to Proteus who reigned in Memphis. Eustathius.

This last remark from Herodotus is sufficient to shew, that Homer is not so fictitious as is generally imagined, that there really was a king named Proteus, that the

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Book IV. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 191

To clear the cloudy front of wrinkled care, 305

And dry the tearful sluices of despair :

Charm'd with that virtuous draught, th' exalted mind

All sense of woe delivers to the wind.

Though on the blazing pile his parent lay,

Or a lov'd brother groan'd his life away, 310

Or darling son oppress'd by ruffian-force

Fell breathless at his feet, a mangled corse,

From morn to eve, impassive and serene,

The man entranc'd would view the deathful scene.

These drugs, so friendly to the joys of life, 315

Bright Helen learn'd from Thon's imperial wife ;

Who sway'd the sceptre, where prolific Nile

With various simples clothes the fat'ned soil.

With wholesome herbage mix'd, the direful bane

Of vegetable venom, taints the plain ; 320

From Paeon sprung, their patron-god imparts

To all the Pharian race his healing arts.

The beverage now prepar'd t' inspire the feast,

The circle thus the beauteous Queen address.

Thron'd in omnipotence, supremest Jove 325

Tempers the fates of human race above ;

By the firm sanction of his sov'reign will,

Alternate are decreed our good and ill.

poet builds his fables upon truth, and that it was truth that originally determined Homer to introduce Proteus into his poetry ; but I intend to explain this more largely in the story of Proteus.

To feastful mirth be this white hour assign'd,
 And sweet discourse, the banquet of the mind. 330
 My self assisting in the social joy,
 Will tell Ulysses' bold exploit in Troy :
 Sole witness of the deed I now declare ;
 Speak you, (who saw) his wonders in the war.

Seam'd o'er with wounds, which his own sabre gave,
 In the vile habit of a village slave, 336

ψ. 331. *Myself*——

Will tell Ulysses' bold exploit—]

What is here related shews the necessity of the introduction of Helen, and the use the poet makes of it: she is not brought in merely as a *muta persona*, to fill up the number of persons; but she relates several incidents, in which she herself was concerned, and which she could only know; and consequently not only diversifies, but carries on the design of the story. Eustathius.

ψ. 335. *Seam'd o'er with wounds, etc.*] The poet here shews his judgment in passing over many instances of the sufferings of Ulysses, and relating this piece of conduct, not mentioned by any other author. The art of Ulysses in extricating himself from difficulties is laid down as the groundwork of the poem, he is *πολύτροπος*, and this is an excellent example of it. Thus further shews the necessity of the appearance of Helen, no other person being acquainted with the story. If this stratagem be not a reality, yet it bears the resemblance of it; and Magabysus the Persian (as Eustathius observes) practised it, as we learn from history. We may reasonably conjecture that Ulysses was committed to Helen, in hopes that he would discover the affairs of the army more freely to her than any other person: for what could be more agreeable to a Greek, than to be committed to the care of a Greek, as Ulysses was to Helen? By the same con-

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The foe deceiv'd, he pass'd the tented plain,
 In Troy to mingle with the hostile train.
 In this attire secure from searching eyes,
 Till haply piercing through the dark disguise 340
 The chief I challeng'd ; he, whose practis'd wit
 Knew all the serpent-mazes of deceit,
 Eludes my search : but when his form I view'd,
 Fresh from the bath with fragrant oils renew'd,
 His limbs in military purple dress'd ; 345
 Each bright'ning grace the genuine Greek confess'd.
 A previous pledge of sacred faith obtain'd,
 Till he the lines and Argive fleet regain'd,
 To keep his stay conceal'd ; the chief declar'd
 The plans of war against the town prepar'd. 350

duct the poet raises the character of Helen, by making her shew her repentance by an act of generosity to her countryman. The original says she gave an oath to Ulysses not to discover him before he was in safety in the Grecian army : now this does not imply that she ever discovered to the Trojans that Ulysses had entered Troy : the contrary opinion is most probable ; for it cannot be imagined, but all Troy must have been incensed greatly against her, had they known that she had concealed one of their mortal enemies, and dismissed him in safety : it was sufficient for Ulysses to take her oath that she would not discover him, till he was in security : he left her future conduct to her own discretion. It is probable that she furnished Ulysses with a sword, for in his return he slew many Trojans : he came to Troy, observes Eustathius, in rags, and like a slave ; and to have concealed a sword, would have endangered his life

Exploring then the secrets of the state,
 He learn'd what best might urge the Dardan fate :
 And safe returning to the Grecian host,
 Sent many a shade to Pluto's dreary coast.
 Loud grief resounded through the tow'rs of Troy, 355
 But my *pleas'd bosom glow'd with secret joy :
 For then with dire remorse, and conscious shame,
 I view'd th' effects of that disastrous flame,

upon a discovery of it, and given strong suspicions of an impostor.

ψ. 351. *Exploring then the secrets of the state.*] The words *εἰσπρίων* is here used in a large sense: it takes in all the observations Ulysses made during his continuance in Troy, it takes in the designs and counsels of the enemy, his measuring the gates, the height of the walls, the easiest place for an assault or ambush, the taking away the Palladium, or whatever else a wise man may be supposed to observe, or act, in execution of such a stratagem. Eustathius.

ψ. 357. *For then with dire remorse, etc.*] The conclusion of this speech is very artful: Helen ascribes her seduction to Venus, and mentions nothing of Paris. Instead of naming Troy, she conceals it, and only says she was carried thither, leaving Troy to the imagination of Menelaus; she suffers not herself to mention names so odious now to herself, and ever to Menelaus, as Paris and Troy. She complements Menelaus very handsomely, and says, that he wanted no accomplishment either in mind or body: it being the nature of man not to resent the injuries of a wife so much upon the account of her being corrupted, but of the preference she gives to another person; he looks upon such a preference as the most affecting part of the injury. Eustathius.

Which kindled by th' imperious queen of love,
 Constrain'd me from my native realm to rove : 360
 And oft in bitterness of soul deplor'd
 My absent daughter, and my dearer lord ;
 Admir'd among the first of human race,
 For ev'ry gift of mind, and manly grace.

Right well, reply'd the King, your speech displays
 The matchless merit of the chief you praise : 366
 Heroes in various climes myself have found,
 For martial deeds, and depth of thought renown'd ;
 But Ithacus, unrival'd in his claim,
 May boast a title to the loudest fame : 370
 In battle calm he guides the rapid storm,
 Wise to resolve, and patient to perform.
 What wond'rous conduct in the chief appear'd,
 When the vast fabric of the steed we rear'd !

ψ. 365. *Meneleus's answer.*] The judgment of the poet in continuing the story concerning Ulysses is not observed by any commentator. Ulysses is the chief hero of the poem, every thing should have a reference to him, otherwise the narration stands still without any advance towards the conclusion of it. The poet therefore to keep Ulysses in our minds, dwells upon his sufferings and adventures : he supplies his not appearing in the present scene of action, by setting his character before us, and continually forcing his prudence, patience, and valour upon our observation. He uses the same art and judgment with relation to Achilles in the *Iliads* : the hero of the poem is absent from the chief scenes of action during much of the time which that poem comprises, but he is continually brought into the mind of the reader, by recounting his exploits and glory.

Some daemon anxious for the Trojan doom, 375

Urg'd you with great Deiphobus to come,

ψ. 375. *Some daemon anxious for the Trojan doom.*]

It is the observation of Eustathius, that these words are very artfully introduced to vindicate Helen; they imply that what she acted was by compulsion, and to evidence this more clearly, Deiphobus is given her for an attendant as a spy upon her actions, that she might not conceal any thing that should happen, but act her part well, by endeavouring to deceive the Greeks in favour of Troy. It is the daemon, not Helen, that is in fault; this, continues Eustathius, answers many objections that lie against Helen: for if she was a real penitent, as she herself affirms, how comes she to endeavour to deceive the Greeks, by the disguise of her voice, into more misery than had yet arisen from a ten years war? Or indeed is it credible that any person could modulate her voice so artfully as to resemble so many voices? And how could the Greeks, inclosed in the wooden horse, believe that their wives, who were in Greece, could be arrived in so short a space as they had been concealed there, from the various regions of Greece, and meet together in Troy? Would the wives of these heroes come into an enemy's country, when the whole army, except these latent heroes, were retired from it? this is ridiculous and impossible. I must confess there is great weight in these objections: but Eustathius answers all by the interposition of the daemon; and by an idle tradition that Helen had the name of Echo, from the faculty of mimicking sounds; and that this gift was bestowed upon her by Venus when she married Menelaus, that she might be able to detect him, if he should prove false to her bed, by imitating the voice of the suspected person: (but Menelaus had more occasion for this faculty than Helen.) As for the excuse of the daemon, it equally excuses all crimes: for instance, was Helen

T' explore the fraud ; with guile oppos'd to guile ;
Slow-paced thrice around th' insidious pile ;

false to Menelaus ? the daemon occasioned it : does she act an imposture to destroy all her Grecian friends, and even Menelaus ? the daemon compels her to it : the daemon compels her to go with Deiphobus, to surround the horse thrice, to sound the sides of it, to endeavour to surprize the latent Greeks by an imitation of the voices of their wives, and in short to act like a person that was very sincere in mischief.

Dacier takes another course, and gives up Helen, but remarks the great address of Menelaus. Helen had, said she, long desired nothing so much as to return to Lacedaemon ; and her heart had long been wholly turned to Menelaus : Menelaus is not at all convinced of this pretended sincerity ; but it would have been too gross, after he had taken her again to his bed, to convict her of falsehood : he therefore contents himself barely to reply, that some daemon, an enemy to the Greeks, had forced her to a conduct disagreeable to her sincerity. This, continues Dacier, is an artful, but severe irony.

As for the objection concerning the impossibility of the Greeks believing their wives could be in Troy ; she answers, that the authors of this objection have not sufficiently considered human nature. The voice of a beloved person might of a sudden, and by surprize, draw from any person a word involuntarily, before he has time to make reflection. This undoubtedly is true, where circumstances make an imposture probable ; but here is an impossibility ; it is utterly impossible to believe the wives of these heroes could be in Troy. Besides, Menelaus himself tells us, that even he had fallen into the snare, but Ulysses prevented it ; this adds to the incredibility of the story : for if this faculty of mimicry was given upon his marriage with Helen, it was

Each noted leader's name you thrice invoke,
 Your accent varying as their spouses spoke : 380
 The pleasing sounds each latent warrior warm'd,
 But most Tydide's and my heart alarm'd :
 To quit the steed we both impatient press,
 Threat'ning to answer from the dark recess.
 Unmov'd the mind of Ithacus remain'd, 385
 And the vain ardors of our love restrain'd :
 But Anticlus unable to controul,
 Spoke loud the language of his yerning soul :
 Ulysses strait with indignation fir'd,
 (For so the common care of Greece requir'd) 390

nothing new to him, he must be supposed to be acquainted with it, and consequently be the less liable to surprize : nay, it is not impossible, but the experiment might have been made upon him before Helen fled away with Paris.

In short, I think this passage wants a further vindication ; the circumstances are low, if not incredible. Virgil, the great imitator of Homer, has given us a very different and more noble description of the destruction of Troy : he has not thought fit to imitate him in this description.

If we allow Helen to act by compulsion, to have feared the Trojans, and that Deiphobus was sent as a spy upon her actions ; yet this is no vindication of her conduct : she still acts a mean part, and, through fear, becomes an accomplice in endeavouring to betray and ruin the Greeks.

I shall just add, that after the death of Paris, Helen married Deiphobus ; that the story of the wooden horse is probably founded upon the taking of Troy by an engine called a horse, as the like engine was called a ram by the Romans.

Firm to his lips his forceful hands apply'd,
Till on his tongue the flutt'ring murmurs dy'd.
Mean-time Minerva from the fraudulent horse,
Back to the court of Priam bent your course.

Inclement fate ! Telemachus replies, 395
Frail is the boasted attribute of wise :
The leader, mingling with the vulgar host,
Is in the common mass of matter lost !
But now let sleep the painful waste repair
Of sad reflection, and corroding care. 400

He ceas'd ; the menial fair that round her wait,
At Helen's beck prepare the room of state :
Beneath an ample portico, they spread
The downy fleece to form the slumbrous bed ;
And o'er soft palls of purple grain unfold 405
Rich tapestry, stiff with inwoven gold :
Then through th' illumin'd dome, to balmy rest
Th' obsequious herald guides each princely guest :
While to his regal bow'r the king ascends,
And beauteous Helen on her lord attends. 410

Soon as the morn, in orient purple drest,
Unbarr'd the portal of the roseate east,
The monarch rose ; magnificent to view,
Th' imperial mantle o'er his vest he threw ;
The glitt'ring zone athwart his shoulder cast 415
A starry fauchion low-depending grac'd,
Clasp'd on his feet th' embroider'd sandals shine,
And forth he moves, majestic and divine :

Instant to young Telemachus he press'd,
And thus benevolent his speech address'd. 420

Say, royal youth, sincere of soul report
What cause hath led you to the Spartan court?
Do public or domestic cares constrain
This toilsome voyage o'er the surgy main?

O highly favour'd delegate of Jove! 425

(Replies the prince) inflam'd with filial love,
And anxious hope, to hear my parent's doom,
A suppliant to your royal court I come.

Our sovereign seat a lewd usurping race
With lawless riot, and mis-rule disgrace; 430

To pamper'd insolence devoted fall
Prime of the flock, and choicest of the stall:

For wild ambition wings their bold desire,
And all to mount th' imperial bed aspire.

But prostrate I implore, oh king! relate 435

The mournful series of my father's fate:
Each known disaster of the man disclose,
Born by his mother to a world of woes!

Recite them! nor in erring pity fear
To wound with storied grief the filial ear: 440

If e'er Ulysses, to reclaim your right,
Avow'd his zeal in council or in fight,
If Phrygian camps the friendly toils attest,
To the fire's merit give the son request.

Deep from his inmost soul Atrides sigh'd, 445
And thus indignant to the prince reply'd:

Heav'ns! would a soft, inglorious, dastard train
 An absent heroe's nuptial joy profane!
 So with her young, amid the woodland shades
 A tim'rous hind the lion's court invades, 450

ψ. 447. *Heav'ns! would a soft, inglorious, dastard train.*] Menelaus is fired with indignation at the injuries offered his friend by the suitors: he breaks out into an exclamation, and, in a just contempt, vouchsafes not to mention them: he thinks he fully distinguishes whom he intends, by calling them ἀνδρακίδες αὐτοὶ, *those cowards*. The comparison which he introduces is very just, they are the fawns, Ulysses is the lion.

This is the first simile that Homer has inserted in the Odyssey; but I cannot think it proceeded from a barrenness of invention, or through phlegm in the declension of his years, as some have imagined. The nature of the poem requires a difference of stile from the Iliad! The Iliad rushes along like a torrent; the Odyssey flows gently on like a deep stream, with a smooth tranquillity; Achilles is all fire, Ulysses all wisdom.

The simile in Homer is really beautiful; but in Hobbs ridiculous.

*As when a stag and hind ent'ring the den
 Of th' absent lion, lulls his whelps with tales
 Of hills and dales; the lion comes agen,
 And tears them into pieces with his nails.*

Can any thing be more foreign to the sense of Homer, or worse translated? He construes κρημνὸς ἐξέρησι, by telling stories of hills and dales to the lions whelps, instead of *juga investigat*: but such mistakes are so frequent in Hobbs, that one would almost suspect his learning in Greek: he has disgraced the best poet, and a very great historian; Homer, and Thucydides.

Leaves in that fatal lair the tender fawns,
 Climbs the green cliff, or feeds the flow'ry lawns:
 Mean-time return'd, with dire remorseless sway
 The monarch-savage rends the trembling prey.
 With equal fury, and with equal fame, 455
 Ulysses soon shall re-assert his claim.
 O Jove, supreme, whom gods and men revere!
 And thou *, to whom 'tis giv'n to gild the sphere!
 With pow'r congenial join'd, propitious aid
 The chief adopted by the martial maid! 460
 Such to our wish the warrior soon restore,
 As when contending on the Lesbian shore
 His prowess Philomelides confess'd,
 And loud-acclaiming Greeks the victor bless'd:
 Then soon th' invaders of his bed and throne, 465
 Their love presumptuous shall with life atone.
 With patient ear, oh royal youth, attend
 The storied labours of thy father's friend:
 Fruitful of deeds, the copious tale is long,
 But truth severe shall dictate to my tongue: 470
 Learn what I heard the sea-born seer relate,
 Whose eye can pierce the dark recess of fate.

* Apollo.

ψ. 462. *As when contending on the Lesbian shore:*
 The poet here gives an account of one of Ulysses's adventures. Philomelides was king of Lesbos, and Eustathius observes, that there was a tradition that Ulysses and Diomedes slew him, and turned a stately monument he had raised for himself into a public place for the reception of strangers.

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Long on th' Egyptian coast by calms confin'd,
 Heav'n to my fleet refus'd a prosp'rous wind :
 No vows had we preferr'd, nor victim slain ! 475
 For this the gods each fav'ring gale restrain,
 Jealous, to see their high behests obey'd,
 Severe, if men th' eternal rights evade !
 High o'er a gulphy sea, the Pharian isle
 Fronts the deep roar of disemboguing Nile : 480

ψ. 479. — *The Pharian isle.*] This description of Pharos has given great trouble to the critics and geographers ; it is generally concluded, that the distance of Pharos is about seven stadia from Alexandria ; Ammianus Marcellinus mentions this very passage thus ; l. 22. *Insula Pharos, ubi Protea cum Phocorum gregibus diversatum Homerus fabulatur inflatus, a civitatis littore mille passibus disparata*, or, *about a mile distant from the shores*. How then comes Homer to affirm it to be distant a full day's sail ? Dacier answers, that Homer might have heard that the Nile, continually bringing down much earthy substance, had enlarged the continent : and knowing it not to be so distant in his time, took the liberty of a poet, and described it as still more distant in the days of Menelaus. But Dacier never sees a mistake in Homer. Had his poetry been worse if he had described the real distance of Pharos ? It is allowable in a poet to disguise the truth, to adorn his story ; but what ornament has he given his poetry by this enlargement ? Bochart has fully proved, that there is no accession to the continent from any substance that the Nile brings down with it : the violent agitation of the seas prohibit it from lodging, and forming itself into solidity. Eratosthenes is of opinion, that Homer was ignorant of the mouths of Nile : but Strabo answers, that his silence about them is not an argument of his ignorance, for nei-

Her distance from the shore, the course begun
 At dawn, and ending with the setting sun,
 A gally measures; when the stiffer gales
 Rise on the poop, and fully stretch the sails.
 There anchor'd vessels safe in harbour lye, 485
 Whilst limpid springs the failing cask supply.

And now the twentieth sun descending, laves
 His glowing axle in the western waves;
 Still with expanded sails we court in vain
 Propitious winds, to waft us o'er the main : 490

ther has he ever mentioned where he was born. But Strabo does not enter fully into the meaning of Eratosthenes: Eratosthenes does not mean that Homer was ignorant of the mouths of Nile from his silence, but because he places Pharos at the distance of a whole day's sail from the continent. The only way to unite this inconsistency is to suppose, that the poet intended to specify the Pelusiac mouth of Nile, from which Pharos stands about a day's sail: but this is submitted to the critics.

I cannot tell whether one should venture to make use of the word *Nile* in the translation; it is doubtless an anachronism; that name being unknown in the times of Homer and Menelaus, when the Nile was called *Ægyptus*. Homer, in this very book,

----- Ἀιγύπτῳ Διὶ πάριος ποταμῶν.

Yet, on the other hand, this name of *Ægyptus* is so little known, that a common reader would scarce distinguish the river from the country; and indeed universal custom has obtained for using the Latin name instead of the Grecian, in many other instances which are equally anachronisms. Witness all the names of the gods and goddesses throughout Homer. Jupiter for Zeus, Juno for Ere, Neptune for Poseidon, etc.

And the pale mariner at once deplores
 His drooping vigour, and exhausted stores.
 When lo ! a bright caerulean form appears,
 The fair Eidothea ! to dispel my fears ;
 Proteus her sire divine. With pity press'd, 495
 Me sole the daughter of the deep address'd ;
 What-time, with hunger pin'd, my absent mates
 Roam the wild isle in search of rural cates,
 Bait the barb'd steel, and from the fishy flood
 Appease th' afflictive fierce desire of food. 500

ψ. 499. *Bait the barb'd steel, and from the fishy flood.*] Menelaus says, hunger was so violent among his companions, that they were compelled to eat fish. Plutarch in his Symposiacs observes, that among the Egyptians, Syrians, and Greeks, to abstain from fish was esteemed a piece of sanctity ; that though the Greeks were encamped upon the Hellespont, there is not the least intimation that they eat fish, or any sea provision ; and that the companions of Ulysses, in the 12th book of the Odyssey, never sought for fish till all their other provisions were consumed, and that the same necessity compelled them to eat the herds of the sun which induced them to taste fish. No fish is ever offered in sacrifice : the Pythagoreans in particular command fish not to be eaten more strictly than any other animal : fish afford no excuse at all for their destruction, they live as it were in another world, disturb not our air, consume not our fruits, or injure the waters ; and therefore the Pythagoreans, who were unwilling to offer violence to any animals, fed very little, or not at all on fishes. I thought it necessary to insert this from Plutarch, because it is an observation that explains other passages in the sequel of the Odyssey.

Whoe'er thou art, the azure goddess cries,
 Thy conduct ill deserves the praise of wise :
 Is death thy choice, or misery thy boast,
 That here inglorious on a barren coast
 Thy brave associates droop, a meager train 505
 With famine pale, and ask thy care in vain ?

Struck with the kind reproach, I strait reply ;
 Whate'er thy title in thy native sky,
 A goddess sure ! for more than mortal grace
 Speaks thee descendant of aetherial race : 510
 Deem not, that here of choice my fleet remains ;
 Some heav'nly pow'r averse my stay constrains :
 O, piteous of my fate, vouchsafe to shew,
 (For what's sequester'd from celestial view ?)
 What power becalms th' innavigable seas ? 515
 What guilt provokes him, and what vows appease ?

I ceas'd, when affable the goddess cry'd ;
 Observe, and in the truths I speak confide :
 Th' oraculous seer frequents the Pharian coast,
 From whose high bed my birth divine I boast : 520
 Proteus, a name tremendous o'er the main,
 The delegate of Neptune's watry reign.

ψ. 521. *Proteus, a name tremendous o'er the main.*] Eustathius enumerates various opinions concerning Proteus; some understand Proteus allegorically to signify the first matter which undergoes all changes; others make him an emblem of true friendship, which ought not to be settled till it has been tried in all shapes: others make Proteus a picture of a flatterer, who takes up all shapes, and suits himself to all forms, in compliance to

Watch with insidious care his known abode;
There fast in chains constrain the various God:

the temper of the person whom he courts. The Greeks, observes Diodorus, imagined all these metamorphoses of Proteus to have been borrowed from the practices of the Ægyptian kings, who were accustomed to wear the figures of lions, bulls or dragons in their diadems, as emblems of royalty, and sometimes that of trees, etc. not so much for ornament as terror. Others took Proteus to be an enchanter; and Eustathius recounts several that were eminent in this art, as Cratisthenes the Phliasian, (which Dacier renders by mistake Callisthenes the Physician) who, when he pleased, could appear all on fire, and assume other appearances to the astonishment of the spectators: such also was Xenophon, Scymnus of Tarentum, Philippides of Syracuse, Heraclitus of Mitylene, and Nymphodorus, all practisers of magical arts; and Eustathius recites, that the Phocæe were made use of in their incantations. Some write that Proteus was an Ægyptian tumbler, who could throw himself into variety of figures and postures; others, a stage-player; others that he was a great general, skilled in all the arts and stratagems of war: Dacier looks upon him to have been an enchanter, or *δαυματοποιός*. It is certain from Herodotus, that there was in the times of Menelaus a king named Proteus, who reigned in Memphis; that Ægypt was always remarkable for those who excelled in magical arts; thus Jannes and Jambres charged, at least in appearance, a rod into a serpent, and water into blood: it is not therefore improbable but that Menelaus hearing of him while he was in Ægypt, went to consult him as an enchanter, which kind of men always pretended to foreknow events: this perhaps was the real foundation of the whole story concerning Proteus; the rest is the fiction and embellishment of the poet, who ascribes to his Proteus whatever the credulity of men usually ascribes to enchanters.

Who bound, obedient to superior force, 525

Unerring will prescribe your destin'd course.

If studious of your realms, you then demand

Their state, since last you left your natal land ;

Instant the God obsequious will disclose

Bright tracks of glory, or a cloud of woes. 530

She ceas'd, and suppliant thus I made reply ;

O goddess ! on thy aid my hopes rely :

Dictate propitious to my duteous ear,

What arts can captivate the changeful seer ?

For perilous th' assay, unheard the toil, 535

T' elude the presence of a God by guile.

Thus to the goddess mild my suit I end.

Then she. Obedient to my rule, attend :

When through the zone of heav'n the mounted sun

Hath journey'd half, and half remains to run ; 540

The seer, while zephyrs curl the swelling deep,

Basks on the breezy shore, in grateful sleep,

His oozy limbs. Emerging from the wave,

The Phocæ swift surround his rocky cave,

Frequent and full ; the consecrated train 545

Of her *, whose azure trident awes the main :

There wallowing warm, th' enormous herd exhales

On oily steam, and taints the noon-tide gales.

To that recess, commodious for surprize,

When purple light shall next suffuse the skies, 550

With me repair ; and from thy warrior band

Three chosen chiefs of dauntless soul command :

* Amphitrite.

Book IV. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 209

Let their auxiliar force befriend the toil,
 For strong the God, and perfected in guile.
 Stretch'd on the shelly shore, he first surveys 555
 The flouncing herd ascending from the seas ;
 The number summ'd, repos'd in sleep profound
 The scaly charge their guardian God surround :
 So with his batt'ring flocks the careful swain
 Abides, pavilion'd on the grassy plain. 560
 With pow'rs united, obstinately bold
 Invade him, couch'd amid the scaly fold :
 Instant he wears, elusive of the rape,
 The mimic force of every savage shape :
 Or glides with liquid lapse a murm'ring stream, 565
 Or wrapt in flame, he glows at every limb.
 Yet still retentive, with redoubled might
 Through each vain passive form constrain his flight.
 But when, his native shape resum'd, he stands
 Patient of conquest, and your cause demands ; 570
 The cause that urg'd the bold attempt declare,
 And soothe the vanquish'd with a victor's pray'r.
 The bands relax'd, implore the seer to say
 What godhead interdicts the wat'ry way ?
 Who strait propitious, in prophetic strain 575
 Will teach you to repass th' unmeasur'd main.

ψ. 569. *But when, his native shape resum'd, etc.*
 This is founded upon the practice of enchanters, who
 never give their answers, till they have astonished the
 imagination of those who consult them with their jug-
 gling delusions. Dacier.

210 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book IV.

She ceas'd, and bounding from the shelvy shore,
Round the descending nymph the waves redounding roar.

High rapt in wonder of the future deed,
With joy impetuous, to the port I speed : 580

The wants of nature with repast suffice,
Till night with grateful shade involv'd the skies,
And shed ambrosial dews. Fast by the deep,
Along the tented shore, in balmy sleep,

Our cares were lost. When o'er the eastern lawn, 585

In saffron robes the daughter of the dawn
Advanc'd her rosy steps ; before the bay,

Due ritual honours to the gods I pay :

Then seek the place the sea-born nymph assign'd,
With three associates of undaunted mind. 590

Arriv'd, to form along th' appointed strand

For each a bed, the scoops the hilly sand :

Then from her azure car, the finny spoils

Of four vast Phocæ takes, to veil her wiles ;

Beneath the finny spoils extended prone, 595

Hard toil! the prophet's piercing eye to shun ;

New from the corse, the scaly frauds diffuse

Unfavoury stench of oil, and brackish ooze :

But the bright sea-maid's gentle pow'r implor'd,

With nectar'd drops the sick'ning sense restor'd. 600

Thus till the sun had travell'd half the skies,

Ambush'd we lie, and wait the bold emprise :

When thronging thick to bask in open air,

The flocks of ocean to the strand repair :

Book IV. HOMER's ODYSSEY. 211

Couch'd on the sunny sand, the monsters sleep : 605

Then Prôteus mounting from the hoary deep,

Surveys his charge, unknowing of deceit :

(In order told, we make the sum complete.)

Pleas'd with the false review, secure he lies,

And leaden slumbers press his drooping eyes. 910

Rushing impetuous forth, we strait prepare

A furious onset with the sound of war,

And shouting seize the God : our force t' evade

His various arts he soon resumes in aid :

A Lion now, he curls a surgy mane ; 615

Sudden, our bands a spotted pard restrain ;

Then arm'd with tusks, and light'ning in his eyes,

A boar's obscener shape the god belies :

ψ. 613. *And shouting seize the god.*—] Proteus has, through the whole story, been described as a god who knew all things ; it may then be asked, how comes it that he did not fore-know the violence that was designed against his own person ? and is it not a contradiction, that he who knew Menelaus without information, should not know that he lay in ambush to seize him ? The only answer that occurs to me is, that these enchanters never pretend to have an inherent fore-knowledge of events, but learn things by magical arts, and by recourse to the secrets of their profession ; so that Proteus having no suspicion, had not consulted his art, and consequently might be surprised by Menelaus : so far is agreeable to the pretensions of such deluders : the poet indeed has drawn him in colours stronger than life ; but poetry adds or detracts at pleasure, and is allowed frequently to step out of the way, to bring a foreign ornament into the story.

On spiry volumes there a dragon rides ;
 Here, from our strict embrace a stream he glides : 620
 And last, sublime his stately growth he rears,
 A tree, and well-dissembled foliage wears.
 Vain efforts ! with superior pow'r compress'd,
 Me with reluctance thus the seer address'd.
 Say, son of Atreus, say what God inspir'd 625
 This daring fraud, and what the boon desir'd ?

I thus ; O thou, whose certain eye foresees
 The fix'd event of fate's remote decrees :
 After long woes, and various toil endur'd,
 Still on this desert isle my fleet is moor'd ; 630
 Unfriended of the gales. All-knowing ! say
 What godhead interdicts the wat'ry way ?
 What vows repentant will the pow'r appease,
 To speed a prosp'rous voyage o'er the seas ?

To Jove, (with stern regard the God replies,) 635
 And all th' offended synod of the skies ;
 Just hecatombs with due devotion slain,
 Thy guilt absolv'd, a prosp'rous voyage gain.
 To the firm sanction of thy fate attend !
 An exile thou, nor cheering face of friend,

ψ. 635. *To Jove — just hecatombs —, etc.*] Homer continually inculcates morality, and piety to the Gods; he gives, in this place, a great instance of the necessity of it. Menelaus cannot succeed in any of his actions, till he pays due honours to the Gods; the neglect of sacrifice is the occasion of all his calamity, and the performance of it opens a way to all his future prosperity.

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Nor sight of natal shore, nor regal dome
Shalt yet enjoy, but still art doom'd to roam.
Once more the Nile, who from the secret source
Of Jove's high seat descends with sweepy force,
Must view his billows white beneath thy oar, 645
And altars blaze along his sanguine shore.
Then will the Gods, with holy pomp ador'd,
To thy long vows a safe return accord.

He ceas'd: heart-wounded without afflictive pain,
(Doom'd to repeat the perils of the main, 650
A shelfy tract, and long!) O seer, I cry,
To the stern sanction of th' offended sky
My prompt obedience bows. But deign to say,
What fate propitious, or what dire dismay

γ. 643. — *Nile, who from the secret source
Of Jove's high seat descends —*]

Homer, it must be confessed, gives the epithet *Διπτερης* generally to all rivers; if he had used it here peculiarly, there might have been room to have imagined, that he had been acquainted with the true cause of the inundations of this famous river: the word *Διπτερης* implies it: for it is now generally agreed, that these prodigious inundations proceed from the vast rains and the melting of the snows on the mountains of the moon in Æthiopia, about the autumnal Equinox; when those rains begin to fall, the river by degrees increases, and as they abate, it decreases; the word *Διπτερης* is therefore peculiarly proper when applied to the Nile; for though all rivers depend upon the waters that fall from the air, or *ix Διός*, yet the Nile more especially; for when the rain ceases, the Nile consists only of seven empty channels.

Sustain those peers, the reliques of our host, 655
 Whom I with Nestor on the Phrygian coast
 Embracing left? Must I the warriors weep,
 Whelm'd in the bottom of the monstrous deep?
 Or did the kind domestic friend deplore
 The breathless heroes on their native shore? 660

Prefs not too far, reply'd the God; but cease
 To know, what known will violate thy peace:
 Too curious of their doom! with friendly woe
 Thy breast will heave, and tears eternal flow.
 Part live; the rest, a lamentable train! 665
 Range the dark bounds of Pluto's dreary reign.
 Two, foremost in the roll of Mars renown'd,
 Whose arms with conquest in thy cause were crown'd,
 Fell by disastrous fate; by tempests tost,
 A third lives wretched on a distant coast. 670

By Neptune rescu'd from Minerva's hate,
 On Gyrae, safe Oilean Ajax fate,
 His ship o'erwhelm'd; but frowning on the floods,
 Impious he roar'd defiance to the gods:
 To his own prowess all the glory gave, 675
 The power defrauding who vouchsaf'd to save.
 This heard the raging ruler of the main;
 His spear, indignant for such high disdain,
 He launch'd; dividing with his forky mace
 Th' aerial summit from the marble base: 680
 The rock rush'd sea-ward, with impetuous roar
 Ingulf'd, and to th' abyss the boaster bore.

y. 682. — *And to th' abyss the boaster bore.*] It is in

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By Juno's guardian aid, the wat'ry vast
 Secure of storms, your royal brother past :
 Till coasting nigh the cape, where Malea shrouds 685
 Her spiry cliffs amid surrounding clouds ;
 A whirling gulf tumultuous from the shore,
 Across the deep his lab'ring vessel bore.
 In an ill-fated hour the coast he gain'd,
 Where late in regal pomp Thyestes reign'd ; 690
 But when his hoary honours bow'd to fate,
 Ægisthus govern'd in paternal state.
 The surges now subside, the tempest ends ;
 From his tall ship the king of men descends :
 There fondly thinks the Gods conclude his toil ! 595
 Far from his own domain salutes the soil :

the original, *He died, having drunk the salt water.*
 This verse has been omitted in many editions of Homer ; and the antients, says Eustathius, blame Aristarchus, for not marking it as a verse that ought to be rejected ; the simplicity of it consists in the sense, more than in the terms, and it is unworthy of Proteus to treat the death of Ajax with pleasantry, as he seems to do, by adding *having drunk salt water* : but why may not Proteus be supposed to be serious, and the term *ἄλμυρόν ὕδωρ*, to imply no more than that he was drowned in the waves of the ocean ? I know only one reason that can give any colour to the objection, viz. its being possibly become a vulgar expression, and used commonly in a ludicrous sense ; then indeed it is to be avoided in poetry ; but it does not follow, because perhaps it might be used in this manner in the days of these critics, that therefore it was so used in the days of Homer. What was poetical in the time of the poet, might be grown vulgar in the time of the critics.

With rapture oft the verge oft Greece reviews,
 And the dear turf with tears of joy bedews.
 Him thus exulting on the distant strand,
 A spy distinguish'd from his airy stand ; 700
 To bribe whose vigilance, Ægisthus told
 A mighty sum of ill-persuading gold :
 There watch'd this guardian of his guilty fear,
 Till the twelfth moon had wheel'd her pale career ;
 And now admonish'd by his eye, to court 705
 With terror wing'd conveys the dread report.
 Of deathful arts expert, his lord employs
 The ministers of blood in dark surprize :
 And twenty youths in radiant mail incas'd,
 Close ambush'd nigh the spacious hall he plac'd. 710
 Then bids prepare the hospitable treat :
 Vain shews of love to veil his felon hate !
 To grace the victor's welcome from the wars,
 A train of coursers, and triumphal cars
 Magnificent he leads : the royal guest 715
 Thoughtless of ill, accepts the fraudulent feast.
 The troop forth issuing from the dark recess,
 With homicidal rage the king oppresses !
 So, whilst he feeds luxurious in the stall,
 The sov'reign of the herd is doom'd to fall. 720

y. 719. *So, whilst he feeds luxurious in the stall, etc.*
 Dacier translates βῦν, by *taureau* a bull ; and misunderstands Eustathius who directly says, that in the second Iliad the poet compares Agamemnon to a bull, in this place to an ox, ταύρω ἰκασεν νῦν δὲ βοῦν αὐτὸν ἀμοίωσεν.

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The partners of his fame and toils at Troy,
Around their lord, a mighty ruin! lie:
Mix'd with the brave, the base invaders bleed;
Ægisthus sole survives to boast the deed.

He said; chill horrors shook my shiv'ring soul, 725
Rack'd with convulsive pangs in dust I roul;
And hate, in madness of extreme despair,
To view the sun, or breath the vital air.
But when superior to the rage of woe,
I stood restor'd, and tears had ceas'd to flow; 730
Lenient of grief, the pitying God began——
Forget the brother, and resume the man:
To fate's supreme dispose the dead resign,
That care be fate's, a speedy passage thine.
Still lives the wretch who wrought the death deplor'd,
But lives a victim for thy vengeful sword; 736
Unless with filial rage Orestes glow,
And swift prevent the meditated blow;
You timely will return a welcome guest,
With him to share the sad funereal feast. 740

He said: new thoughts my beating heart employ,
My gloomy soul receives a gleam of joy.
Fair hope revives; and eager I address
The prescient godhead to reveal the rest.

The one is undoubtedly designed to describe the courage
and majestic port of a warrior, the other to give us
an image of a prince falling in full peace and plenty,
ὡς βῦν ἐνὶ φάρῳ.

The doom decreed of these disastrous two 745
 I've heard with pain, but oh! the tale pursue;
 What third brave son of Mars the fates constrain
 To roam the howling desert of the main:
 Or in eternal shade if cold he lies,
 Provoke new sorrow from these grateful eyes. 750

ψ. 749. *Or in eternal shade if cold he lies.*] Proteus in the beginning of his relation had said, that *one person was alive, and remained enclosed by the ocean*: how then comes Menelaus here to say, give me an account of that other person who is alive, or dead? Perhaps the sorrow which Menelaus conceived for his friend Ulysses, might make him fear the worst; and Proteus adding, *enclosed by the ocean*, might give a suspicion that he was dead, the words being capable of ambiguity. However this be, it sets the friendship of Menelaus in a strong light: where friendship is sincere, a state of uncertainty is a state of fears, we dread even possibilities, and give them an imaginary certainty. Upon this, one of the finest compliments that a poet ever made to a patron turns, that of Horace to Mecaenas, in the first of the Epodes.

It may not be perhaps disagreeable to the reader to observe, that Virgil has borrowed this story of Proteus from Homer, and translated it almost literally. Rapine says, that Homer's description is more ingenious and fuller of invention, but Virgil's more judicious. I wish that critic had given his reasons for his opinion. I believe in general, the plan of the Iliad and Odyssey is allowed, by the best of critics, to be more perfect than that of the Æneis. Homer, with respect to the unity of time, has the advantage very manifestly; Rapine confesses it, and Aristotle proposes him as an example to all epic authors. Where then is the superiority of judgment? Is it that there are more fabulous, I mean

That chief, rejoin'd the God, his race derives
 From Ithaca, and wond'rous woes survives;
 Laertes's son: girt with circumfluous tides,
 He still calamitous constraint abides.

incredible, stories in Homer than Virgil? as that of the Cyclops, the ships of Alcinous, etc. Virgil has imitated most of these bold fables, and the story of the ships of Alcinous is not more incredible than the transformation of the ships of Æneas. But this is too large a subject to be discussed in the compass of these annotations. In particular passages I freely allow the preference to Virgil, as in the descent of Æneas into hell, etc. but in this story of Proteus, I cannot see any superiority of judgment. Virgil is little more than a translator; to shew the particulars would be too tedious: I refer it to the reader to compare the two authors, and shall only instance in one passage.

Ἡμεῖς δ' αὖν ἰαχοντες ἐπισσόμεθ', ἀμφὶ δὲ χεῖρας,
 Βαλλάμεν. ὅδ' ὁ γέρον δολιχὸς ἐπέλαβeto τέχνης,
 Ἀλλ' ἦτοι πρῶτιστ' αἰὼν γένετ' ἠϋγένειος
 Αὐτὰρ ἔπειτα δράκων, καὶ πᾶρδαλις ἠδὲ μέγας σῦς,
 Σίνετο δ' οὖρον ὕδωρ, καὶ δένδρεον ὑψιπέτλον, etc.

*Cum clamore ruit magno, manicisque jacentem
 Occupat: ille suae contra non immemor artis,
 Omnia transformat sese in miracula rerum,
 Ignemque, horribilemque feram, fluviumque liquentem, etc.*

Homer has a manifest advantage in the occasion of the story: the loss of a few bees seems to be a cause too trivial for an undertaking so great as the surprize of a deity; whereas the whole happiness of Menelaus depends upon this consultation of Proteus: this is a far more important cause, and consequently in this respect something more is due to Homer than the sole honour of an inventor.

Him in Calypso's cave of late I view'd, 755
 When streaming grief his faded cheek bedew'd.
 But vain his pray'r, his arts are vain to move
 Th' enamour'd goddess, or elude her love:
 His vessel sunk, and dear companions lost,
 He lives reluctant on a foreign coast. 760
 But oh belov'd by heav'n ! reserv'd to thee
 A happier lot the smiling fates decree :
 Free from that law, beneath whose mortal sway
 Matter is chang'd, and varying forms decay ;
 Elysium shall be thine ; the blissful plains 765
 Of utmost earth, where Rhadamanthus reigns.

ψ. 765. *Elysium shall be thine ; the blissful plain
 Of utmost earth, etc.]*

This is the only place in which the Elysian field is mentioned in Homer. The conjectures of the ancients are very various about it : Plato, in his *Phaed.* places it in *coelo stellato*, or the region of the stars ; but since Homer fixes it, *ὡς αἰπὰτα γαίης*, or, as Milton expresses it, at the *earth's green end*, I will pass over the conjectures of others, especially since the *μακάριον Νῆος*, by which others express Elysium, confines it to this world.

Strabo, says Eustathius, places it not far from *Maurasia*, that lies near the Straights : it is supposed by Bochart, as Dacier observes, that the fable is of Phœnician extraction, that *Alizuth*, in Hebrew, signifies *joy* or *exultation* ; which word the Greeks, adapting to their way of pronunciation, called *Elysium*. If this be true, I should come into an opinion that has much prevailed, that the Greeks had heard of Paradise from the Hebrews ; and that the Hebrews describing Paradise as a place of *Alizuth*, or *joy*, gave occasion to all the fables of the Grecian Elysium.

Joys ever-young, unmix'd with pain or fear,
 Fill the wide circle of th' eternal year:
 Stern winter smiles on that auspicious clime:
 The fields are florid with unfading prime: 770
 From the bleak pole no winds inclement blow,
 Mold the round hail, or flake the fleecy snow;
 But from the breezy deep, the blest inhale
 The fragrant murmurs of the western gale.
 This grace peculiar will the Gods afford 775
 To thee the son of Jove, and beauteous Helen's lord.

He ceas'd, and plunging in the vast profound,
 Beneath the God the whirling billows bound.
 Then speeding back, involv'd in various thought,
 My friends attending at the shore I sought. 780
 Arriv'd, the rage of hunger we controul,
 Till light with silent shade invests the pole;
 Then lose the cares of life in pleasing rest.—
 Soon as the morn reveals the roseate east,
 With sails we wing the masts, our anchors weigh, 785
 Unmoor the fleet, and rush into the sea.
 Rang'd on the banks, beneath our equal oars
 White curl the waves, and the vex'd ocean roars.
 Then steering backward from the Pharian isle,
 We gain the stream of Jove-descended Nile: 790
 There quit the ships, and on the destin'd shore
 With ritual hecatombs the Gods adore:
 Their wrath aton'd, to Agamemnon's name
 A cenotaph I raise of deathless fame.

Him in Calypso's cave of late I view'd, 755
 When streaming grief his faded cheek bedew'd.
 But vain his pray'r, his arts are vain to move
 Th' enamour'd goddess, or elude her love :
 His vessel sunk, and dear companions lost,
 He lives reluctant on a foreign coast. 760
 But oh belov'd by heav'n ! reserv'd to thee
 A happier lot the smiling fates decree :
 Free from that law, beneath whose mortal sway
 Matter is chang'd, and varying forms decay ;
 Elysium shall be thine ; the blissful plains 765
 Of utmost earth, where Rhadamanthus reigns.

ψ. 765. *Elysium shall be thine ; the blissful plain
 Of utmost earth, etc.]*

This is the only place in which the Elysian field is mentioned in Homer. The conjectures of the ancients are very various about it : Plato, in his *Phaed.* places it in *coelo stellato*, or the region of the stars ; but since Homer fixes it, *ἰς αἰπὰρά γαῖαν*, or, as Milton expresses it, at the *earth's green end*, I will pass over the conjectures of others, especially since the *μακάριον Νῆος*, by which others express Elysium, confines it to this world.

Strabo, says Eustathius, places it not far from *Maurusia*, that lies near the Straights : it is supposed by Bochart, as Dacier observes, that the fable is of Phœnician extraction, that *Alizuth*, in Hebrew, signifies *joy* or *exultation* ; which word the Greeks, adapting to their way of pronunciation, called *Elysus*. If this be true, I should come into an opinion that has much prevailed, that the Greeks had heard of Paradise from the Hebrews ; and that the Hebrews describing Paradise as a place of *Alizuth*, or *joy*, gave occasion to all the fables of the Grecian Elysium.

Joys ever-young, unmix'd with pain or fear,
 Fill the wide circle of th' eternal year:
 Stern winter smiles on that auspicious clime:
 The fields are florid with unfading prime: 770
 From the bleak pole no winds inclement blow,
 Mold the round hail, or flake the fleecy snow;
 But from the breezy deep, the blest inhale
 The fragrant murmurs of the western gale:
 This grace peculiar will the Gods afford 775
 To thee the son of Jove, and beauteous Helen's lord.

He ceas'd, and plunging in the vast profound,
 Beneath the God the whirling billows bound.
 Then speeding back, involv'd in various thought,
 My friends attending at the shore I sought. 780
 Arriv'd, the rage of hunger we controll,
 Till light with silent shade invests the pole;
 Then lose the cares of life in pleasing rest.—
 Soon as the morn reveals the roseate east,
 With sails we wing the masts, our anchors weigh, 785
 Unmoor the fleet, and rush into the sea.
 Rang'd on the banks, beneath our equal oars
 White curl the waves, and the vex'd ocean roars.
 Then steering backward from the Pharian isle,
 We gain the stream of Jove-descended Nile: 790
 There quit the ships, and on the destin'd shore
 With ritual hecatombs the Gods adore:
 Their wrath aton'd, to Agamemnon's name
 A cenotaph I raise of deathless fame.

These rites to piety and grief discharg'd : 795
 The friendly Gods a springing gale enlarg'd :
 The fleet swift tilting o'er the surges flew,
 Till Grecian cliffs appear'd a blissful view !

Thy patient ear hath heard me long relate
 A story, fruitful of disastrous fate : 800
 And now, young prince, indulge my fond request ;
 Be Sparta honour'd with his royal guest,
 Till from his eastern goal, the joyous sun
 His twelfth diurnal race begins to run.
 Mean-time my train the friendly gifts prepare, 805
 Three sprightly coursers, and a polish'd car :
 With these a goblet of capacious mold,
 Figur'd with art to dignify the gold,
 (Form'd for libation to the Gods,) shall prove
 A pledge and monument of sacred love. 810

My quick return, young Ithacus rejoin'd,
 Damps the warm wishes of my raptur'd mind :
 Did not my fate my needful haste constrain,
 Charm'd by your speech, so graceful and humane,
 Lost in delight the circling year would roll, 815
 While deep attention fix'd my list'ning soul.
 But now to Pyle permit my destin'd way,
 My lov'd associates chide my long delay.

¶ 806. *Three sprightly coursers.*] How comes it
 to pass that Menelaus proffers three horses to Telemachus ?
 This was a complete set among the ancients, they used
 one pole-horse and two leaders. Eustathius.

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In dear remembrance of your royal grace,
I take the present of the promis'd vase ; 820
The coursers for the champion sports, retain;
That gift our barren rocks will render vain:

Y. 822. *That gift our barren rocks will render vain.*
This passage where Telemachus refuses the horses has been much observed and turned to a moral sense, viz. as a lesson to men to desire nothing but what is suitable to their conditions. Horace has introduced it into his epistles.

*Haud male Telemachus proles patientis Ulyssæi
Non est aptus equis Ithacæ locus, ut neque planis
Porrectus spaciis, nec multæ prodigis herbae :
Atride, magis opta tibi tua dona relinquam.*

This is the reason why Ulysses, as Eustathius observes upon the tenth of the Iliads, leaves the horses of Rhesus to the disposal of Diomedes ; so that the same spirit of wisdom reigned in Telemachus, that was so remarkable in Ulysses. This is the reason why Menelaus smiled ; it was not at the frankness or simplicity of Telemachus, but it was a smile of joy, to see the young prince inherit his father's wisdom.

It is the remark of Eustathius, that Telemachus is far from exalting the nature of his country ; he confesses it to be barren, and more barren than the neighbouring islands ; yet that natural and laudable affection which all worthy persons have for their country makes him prefer it to places of a more happy situation. This appears to me a replication to what Menelaus had before offered concerning the transplantation of Ulysses to Sparta ; this is contained in *ἰσχυροτέρῳ* ; and then the meaning is, it is true, Ithaca is a barren region, yet more desirable than this country of Lacedaemon, this *ἰσχυρότερος γαῖα*. It is the more probable from the offer of horses which

Horrid with cliffs, our meagre land allows
 Thin herbage for the mountain goat to browse,
 But neither mead nor plain supplies, to feed 825
 The sprightly courser, or indulge his speed :
 To sea-surrounded realms the Gods assign
 Small tract of fertile lawn, the least to mine.

His hand the king with tender passion press'd,
 And smiling thus, the royal youth address'd : 830
 O early worth ! a soul so wise, and young,
 Proclaims you from the sage Ulysses sprung.
 Selected from my stores, of matchless price
 An urn shall recompence your prudent choice :
 Not mean the massy mold, of silver grac'd 835
 By Vulcan's art, the verge with gold enchas'd :

Menelaus had then made, and is also another reason
 for the smile of Menelaus.

Eustathius remarks that Menelaus, though he has expressed the greatest friendship for Ulysses, yet makes no offer to restore the fortunes of his friend by any military assistance ; though he had a most fair opportunity given him to repay the past kindness of Ulysses to his wife Penelope, and his son Telemachus ; and how comes Telemachus not to ask it either of Nestor or Menelaus ? He answers, that this depended upon the uncertainty they were yet under, concerning the life of Ulysses. But the truer reason in my opinion is, that the nature of epic poetry requires a contrary conduct : the hero of the poem is to be the chief agent, and the re-establishment of his fortunes must be owing to his own wisdom and valour. I have enlarged upon this already, so that there is no occasion in this place to insist upon it.

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Book IV. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 225

A pledge the sceptred pow'r of Sidon gave.

When to his realm I plow'd the orient wave.

Thus they alternate; while with artful care
The menial train the regal feast prepare: 840

The firflings of the flock are doom'd to dye;

Rich fragrant wines the chearing bowl supply;

A female band the gift of Ceres bring;

And the gilt roofs with genial triumph ring.

Mean-while, in Ithaca, the Suitor-pow'rs 845
In active games divide their jovial hours:

In Arcas vary'd with mosaic art,

Some whirl the disk, and some the jav'lin dart.

Aside, sequester'd from the vast resort,

Antinous fate spectator of the sport; 850

With great Eurymachus, of worth confest,

And high descent, superior to the rest;

Whom young Noemon lowly thus address.

My ship equipp'd within the neighb'ring port,
The prince, departing from the Pylian court, 855

Requested for his speed; but, courteous, say

When steers he home, or why this long delay?

For Elis I should sail with utmost speed,

T'import twelve mares which there luxurious feed,

And twelve young mules, a strong laborious race, 860

New to the plow, unpractis'd in the trace.

Unknowning of the course to Pyle design'd,

A sudden horror seiz'd on either mind:

The prince in rural bow'r they fondly thought,

Numb'ring his flocks and herds, not far remote. 865

Relate, Antinous cries, devoid of guile,
 When spread the prince his sail for distant Pyle?
 Did chosen chiefs across the gulphy main
 Attend his voyage or domestic train?
 Spontaneous did you speed his secret course, 870
 Or was the vessel seiz'd by fraud or force?

With willing duty, not reluctant mind,
 (Noemon cry'd) the vessel was resign'd.
 Who in the balance with the great affairs
 Of courts, presume to weigh their private cares? 875
 With him the peerage next in pow'r to you:
 And Mentor, captain of the lordly crew,
 Or some celestial in his rev'rend form,
 Safe from the secret rock and adverse storm,
 Pilots the course: for when the glimm'ring-ray 880
 Of yester dawn disclos'd the tender day,
 Mentor himself I saw, and much admir'd.—

Then ceas'd the youth, and from the court retir'd.
 Confounded and appall'd, th' unfinish'd game
 The suitors quit, and all to council came: 885
 Antinous first th' assembled peers address'd,
 Rage sparkling in his eyes, and burning in his breast.

O shame to manhood! shall one daring boy
 The scheme of all our happiness destroy?
 Fly unperceiv'd, seducing half the flow'r 890
 Of nobles, and invite a foreign pow'r?
 The pond'rous engine rais'd to crush us all,
 Recoiling, on his head is sure to fall.

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Instant prepare me, on the neighb'ring strand,
With twenty chosen mates a vessel mann'd; 895

For ambush'd close beneath the Samian shore
His ship returning shall my spies explore :
He soon his rashness shall with life atone,
Seek for his father's fate, but find his own.

With vast applause the sentence all approve ; 900
Then rise, and to the feastful hall remove :

Swift to the queen the herald Medon ran,
Who heard the consult of the dire Divan :
Before her dome the royal matron stands,
And thus the message of his haste demands. 905

ψ. 896. *For ambush'd close, etc.*] We have here another use which the poet makes of the voyage of Telemachus. Eustathius remarks, that these incidents not only diversify but enliven the poem. But it may be asked why the poet makes not use of so fair an opportunity to insert a gallant action of Telemachus, and draw him not as eluding, but defeating his adversaries ? The answer is easy ; that the suitors sailed completely armed, and Telemachus unprovided of any weapons : and therefore Homer consults credibility, and forbears to paint his young hero in the colours of a knight in romance, who upon all disadvantages engages and defeats his opposers. But then to what purpose is this ambush of the suitors, and what part of the design of the poem is carried on by it ? The very chief aim of it ; to shew the sufferings of Ulysses : he is unfortunate in all relations of life, as a king, as an husband, and here very eminently as a father ; these sufferings are laid down in the proposition of the Odyssey as essential to the poem, and consequently this ambush laid by the suitors against the life of Telemachus is an essential ornament.

What will the suitors ! must my servant train
 Th' allotted labours of the day refrain,
 For them to form some exquisite repast ?
 Heaven grant this festival may prove their last !
 Or if they still must live, from me remove 910
 The double plague of luxury and love !

y. 906. *The speech of Penelope.*] Longinus in particular commends this speech as a true picture of a person that feels various emotions of soul, and is born by every gust of passion from sentiment to sentiment, with sudden and unexpected transitions. There is some obscurity in the Greek, this arises from the warmth with which he speaks, she has not leisure to explain herself fully, a circumstance natural to a person in anger.

Penelope gives a very beautiful picture of Ulysses :
 ' The best of princes are allowed to have their favorites,
 ' and give a greater share of affection than ordinary to
 ' particular persons. But Ulysses was a father to all
 ' his people alike, and loved them all as his children ;
 ' a father, though he bears a more tender affection to
 ' one child than to another, yet shews them all an equal
 ' treatment ; thus also a good king is not swayed by inclination, but justice, towards all his subjects.' Dac.

One circumstance is very remarkable, and gives us a full view of a person in anger ; at the very sight of Medon, Penelope flies out into passion, she gives him not time to speak one syllable, but speaks herself as if all the suitors were present, and reproaches them in the person of Medon, though Medon is just to her and Ulysses ; but anger is an undistinguishing passion. What she says of ingratitude, recalls to my memory what is to be found in Laertius : Aristotle being asked what thing upon earth soonest grew old ? replied, *an obligation*. *Τὸ τὰ χρεὶα γρηγόρει;* *respondit, χάρις.*

Forbear, ye sons of insolence ! forbear,
In riot to consume a wretched heir.

In the young soul illustrious thought to raise,
Were ye not tutor'd with Ulysses' praise ? 915

Have not your fathers oft my lord defin'd,
Gentle of speech, beneficent of mind ?

Some kings with arbitrary rage devour,
Or in their tyrant-minions vest the pow'r :

Ulysses let no partial favours fall, 920
The people's parent, he protected all :

But absent now, perfidious and ingrate !
His stores ye ravage, and usurp his state.

He thus ; O were the woes you speak the worst !

They form a deed more odious and accurst ; 925
More dreadful than your boding soul divines :

But pitying Jove avert the dire designs !
The darling object of your royal care

Is mark'd to perish in a deathful snare :
Before he anchors in his native port, 930

From Pyle re-sailing and the Spartan court,
Horrid to speak ! in ambush is decreed

The hope and heir of Ithaca to bleed !
Sudden she sunk beneath the weighty woes,

The vital streams a chilling horror froze : 635
The big round tear stands trembling in her eye,

And on her tongue imperfect accents dye.
At length, in tender language, interwove

With sighs, she thus express'd her anxious love.

Why rashly would my son his fate explore, 940
 Ride the wild waves, and quit the safer shore?
 Did he, with all the greatly wretched, crave
 A blank oblivion, and untimely grave!

'Tis not, reply'd the sage, to Medon giv'n
 To know, if some inhabitant of heav'n, 945
 In his young breast the daring thought inspir'd;
 Or if alone with filial duty fir'd,
 The winds and waves he tempts in early bloom,
 Studious to learn his absent father's doom.

The sage retir'd: unable to controul 950
 The mighty griefs that swell her lab'ring soul,
 Rolling convulsive on the floor, is seen
 The piteous object of a prostrate queen.
 Words to her dumb complaint a pause supplies,
 And breath, to waste in unavailing cries. 955
 Around their sov'reign wept the menial fair,
 To whom she thus address'd her deep despair.

ψ. 941. *Ride the wild waves*——] Were this passage to be rendered literally, it would run thus, *climb the swift ships, which are horses to men in the seas*. Eustathius observes the allusion is very just, and that the only doubt is, whether it be brought in opportunely by Penelope? It may be doubted, if the mind could find leisure to introduce such allusions. Dacier answers, that Penelope speaks thus through indignation: the grief that she conceives at the hardness of men, in finding out a way to pass the seas as well as land, furnished her with these figures very naturally, for figures are agreeable to passion.

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Behold a wretch whom all the Gods consign
 To woe! Did ever sorrows equal mine?
 Long to my joys my dearest lord is lost, 960
 His country's buckler, and the Grecian boast:
 Now from my fond embrace by tempests torn,
 Our other column of the state is born:
 Nor took a kind adieu, nor sought consent!—
 Unkind confed'rates in his dire intent! 965
 I'll suits it with your shews of duteous zeal,
 From me the purpos'd voyage to conceal:
 Though at the solemn midnight hour he rose,
 Why did you fear to trouble my repose?
 He either had obey'd my fond desire, 970
 Or seen his mother pierc'd with grief expire.
 Bid Dolius quick attend, the faithful slave,
 Whom to my nuptial train Icarus gave,
 To tend the fruit-groves: with incessant speed
 He shall this violence of death decreed, 975
 To good Laertes tell. Experienc'd age
 May timely intercept the ruffian rage,
 Convene the tribes, the murd'rous plot reveal,
 And to their pow'r to save his race appeal.
 Then Euryclea thus. My dearest dread! 980
 Though to the sword I bow this hoary head,
 Or if a dungeon be the pain decreed,
 I own me conscious of th' unpleasing deed:
 Auxiliar to his flight, my aid implor'd,
 With wine and viands I the vessel stor'd; 985

A solemn oath impos'd the secret seal'd,
 'Till the twelfth dawn the light of heav'n reveal'd.
 Dreading th' effect of a fond mother's fear,
 He dar'd not violate your royal ear.
 But bathe, and in imperial robes array'd,
 Pay due devotions to the martial * maid,
 And rest affianc'd in her guardian aid.
 Send not to good Laertes, nor engage
 In toils of state the miseries of age :
 'Tis impious to surmize, the pow'rs divine 995
 To ruin doom the Jove-descended line :
 Long shall the race of just Arceſius reign,
 And iſles remote enlarge his old domain.

* Minerva.

ψ. 998. *And iſles remote enlarge his old domain.*] Dacier offers a criticiſm upon theſe laſt words of Euryſclea: it cannot be imagined theſe fertile fields can be ſpoken of Ithaca; Plutarch's deſcription of it is intirely contradictory to this: 'Ithaca, ſays he, is rough and mountainous, fit only to breed goats; upon cultivation it ſcarce yields any fruits, and theſe ſo worthleſs, as ſcarce to recompenſe the labour of gathering.' Homer therefore by this expreſſion intended the other dominions of Ulyſſes, ſuch as Cephalenia, etc.

But I queſtion not that the whole dominions of Ulyſſes are included, Ithaca as well as Cephalenia; for tho' Ithaca was mountainous, yet the vallies were fruitful, according to the deſcription of it in the 13th of the Odysſey.

*The rugged ſoil allows no level ſpace
 For flying chariots, or the rapid race;*

The queen her speech with calm attention hears,
 Her eyes restrain the silver-streaming tears: 1000
 She bathes, and rob'd, the sacred dome ascends;
 Her pious speed a female train attends:
 The salted cakes in canisters are laid,
 And thus the queen invokes Minerva's aid.

Daughter divine of Jove, whose arm can wield
 Th' avenging bolt, and shake the dreadful shield! 1006
 If e'er Ulysses to thy fane prefer'd
 The best and choicest of his flock and herd;
 Hear, goddess, hear, by those oblations won;
 And for the pious sire preserve the son: 1010
 His wish'd return with happy pow'r befriend,
 And on the suitors let thy wrath descend.

She ceas'd; shrill ecstasies of joy declare
 The fav'ring goddess present to the pray'r:
 The suitors heard, and deem'd the mirthful voice 1015
 A signal of her hymenaeal choice:

*Yet not ungrateful to the peasant's pain,
 Suffices fulness to the swelling grain;
 The loaded trees their various fruits produce,
 And clustring grapes afford a gen'rous juice, etc.*

As for her remark upon ἀπόπροθι, it is of no validity;
 the word stands in opposition to δώματα, and implies
 no more than *here*, or at a distance in general.

γ. 1015. *The suitors heard, and deem'd the mirthful voice,
 A signal of her hymenaeal choice.*]

It may be asked whence this conjecture of the suitors
 arises? Penelope is described as weeping grievously,
 and fainting away, and yet immediately the suitors con-

Whilst one most jovial thus accosts the board ;

‘ Too late the queen selects a second lord :

‘ In evil hour the nuptial rite intends,

‘ When o’er her son disastrous death impends.’ 1020

Thus he, unskill’d of what the fates provide !

But with severe rebuke Antinous cry’d.

These empty vaunts will make the voyage vain ;

Alarm not with discourse the menial train :

clude she is preparing for the nuptials. Eustathius answers, that undoubtedly the suitors understood the queen had purified herself with water, and supplicated the goddess Minerva, though the poet omits the relation of such little particularities. But whence is it that the poet gives a greater share of wisdom to Euryclea than to Penelope ? Penelope commands a servant to fly with the news of the absence of Telemachus to Laertes, which could not at all advantage Telemachus, and only grieve Laertes : Euryclea immediately diverts her from that vain intention, advises her to have recourse to heaven, and not add misery to the already miserable Laertes : this is wisdom in Euryclea. But it must be confessed, that the other is nature in Penelope : Euryclea is calm, Penelope in a passion : and Homer would have been a very bad painter of human nature, if he had drawn Penelope thus heated with passion in the mild temper of Euryclea ; grief and resentment give Penelope no time to deliberate, whereas Euryclea is less concerned, and consequently capable of thinking with more tranquillity.

ŷ. 1022. *With rebuke severe Antinous cry’d.*] Antinous speaks thus in return to what had been before said by one of the suitors concerning Telemachus, viz. ‘ the queen little imagines that her son’s death approaches ;’ he fears lest Penelope should know their intentions, and hinder their measures by raising the subjects of Ithaca that still retain’d their fidelity. Dacier.

The great event with silent hope attend ; 1025
Our deeds alone our council must commend.

His speech thus ended short, he frowning rose,
And twenty chiefs renown'd for valour chose :
Down to the strand he speeds with haughty strides,
Where anchor'd in the bay the vessel rides ; 1030
Replete with mail, and military store,
In all her tackle trim to quit the shore.

The desp'rate crew ascend, unfurl the sails ;
(The sea-ward prow invites the tardy gales)
Then take repast, till Hesperus display'd 1035
His golden circlet in the western shade.

Mean-time the queen without refection due,
Heart-wounded, to the bed of state withdrew :
In her sad breast the prince's fortunes roul,
And hope and doubt alternate seize her soul. 1040
So when the wood-man's toil her cave surrounds
And with the hunter's cry the grove resounds ;

Y. 1041. *So when the wood-man's toil, etc.*] The poet, to shew the majesty and high spirit of Penelope, compares her to a lioness : he manages the allusion very artfully : he describes the lioness not as exerting any dreadful acts of violence, (for such a comparison is only proper to be applied to a hero) but inclosed by her enemies ; which at once shews both her danger and nobleness of spirit under it : it is in the Greek δόλιον κύκλον, which may signify either a circle of toils or nets, or a circle of enemies : the former is perhaps preferable, as corresponding best with the condition of Penelope, who was surrounded with the secret ambushes and snares of the suitors. Eustathius.

With grief and rage the mother-lion stung,
Fearless herself, yet trembles for her young.

While pensive in the silent slumb'rous shade, 1045
Sleep's gentle pow'rs her drooping eyes invade;
Minerva, life-like on imbody'd air,
Impress'd the form of Iphthima the fair:
(Icarius' daughter she, whose blooming charms
Allur'd Eumelus to her virgin-arms; 1050

*v. 1047. Minerva, life-like on imbody'd air,
Impress'd the form, etc.]*

We have here an imaginary being introduced by the poet: the whole is managed with great judgment; it is short, because it has not a direct and immediate relation to the progress of the poem, and because such imaginary entercourses have ever been looked upon as sudden in appearance, and as sudden in vanishing away. The use the poet makes of it, is to relieve Penelope from the extremity of despair, that she may act her part in the future scenes with courage and constancy. We see it is Minerva who sends this phantom to Penelope to comfort her: now this is an allegory to express, that as soon as the violence of sorrow was over, the mind of Penelope returned to some degree of tranquillity: Minerva is no more than the result of her own reflection and wisdom, which banished from her breast those melancholy apprehensions. The manner likewise of its introduction is not less judicious; the mind is apt to dwell upon those objects in sleep which make a deep impression when awake: this is the foundation of the poet's fiction; it is no more than a dream which he here describes, but he clothes it with a body, gives it a momentary existence, and by this method exalts a low circumstance into dignity and poetry.

A sceptred lord, who o'er the fruitful plain
 Of Theffaly wide stretch'd his ample reign :)
 As Pallas will'd, along the fable skies
 To calm the queen the phantom sister flies.
 Swift on the regal dome descending right, 1055
 The bolted valves are pervious to her flight.
 Close to her head the pleasing vision stands,
 And thus performs Minerva's high commands,

O why, Penelope, this causeless fear,
 To render sleep's soft blessing unsincere ? 1060
 Alike devote to sorrow's dire extreme
 The day reflection, and the midnight dream !
 Thy son, the Gods propitious will restore,
 And bid thee cease his absence to deplore.

To whom the queen, (whilst yet her pensive mind
 Was in the silent gates of sleep confin'd) 1066
 O sister, to my soul for ever dear,
 Why this first visit to reprove my fear ?
 How in a realm so distant should you know
 From what deep source my ceaseless sorrows flow ? 1070
 To all my hope my royal lord is lost,
 His country's buckler, and the Grecian boast :
 And with consummate woe to weigh me down,
 The heir of all his honours, and his crown.

¶. 1073. *And with consummate woe, etc.*] In the original, Penelope says plainly, she is more concerned for her son than her husband. I shall translate Dacier's observation upon this passage. We ought not to reproach Penelope for this seemingly shocking declaration,

My darling son is fled ! an easy prey 1075

To the fierce storms, or men more fierce than they :

Who in a league of blood associates sworn,

Will intercept th' unwary youth's return.

Courage resume, the shadowy form reply'd,

In the protecting care of heav'n confide : 1080

On him attends the blue-ey'd martial maid ;

What earthly can implore a surer aid ?

Me now the guardian goddess deigns to send,

To bid the patient his return attend.

The queen replies : if in the blest abodes, 1085

A goddess thou, hast commerce with the Gods ;

Say, breathes my lord the blissful realm of light,

Or lies he wrapt in ever-during night ?

in preferring a son to an husband : her sentiment is natural and just ; she had all the reason in the world to believe that Ulysses was dead, so that all her hopes, all her affection was entirely placed upon Telemachus : his loss therefore must unavoidably touch her with the highest degree of sensibility ; if he is lost, she can have recourse to no second comfort. But why may we not allow the reason which Penelope herself gives for this superiority of sorrow for Telemachus ? ' Telemachus, ' says she, is unexperienced in the world, and unable ' to contend with difficulties ; whereas Ulysses knew ' how to extricate himself upon all emergencies.' This is a sufficient reason why she should fear more for Telemachus than Ulysses : her affection might be greater for Ulysses than Telemachus, yet her fears might be stronger for the son than the husband, Ulysses being capable to surmount dangers by experience, Telemachus being new to all difficulties.

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Enquire not of his doom, the phantom cries,
I speak not all the counsel of the skies : 1090
Nor must indulge with vain discourse, or long,
The windy satisfaction of the tongue.

Swift through the valves the visionary fair
Repas'd, and viewless mix'd with common air.
The queen awakes, deliver'd of her woes : 1095
With florid joy her heart dilating glows :
The vision, manifest of future fate,
Makes her with hope her son's arrival wait.

Mean time the suitors plow the wat'ry plain,
Telemachus in thought already slain ! 1100
When sight of less'ning Ithaca was lost,
Their sail directed for the Samian coast,
A small but verdant isle appear'd in view,
And Asteris th' advancing pilot knew :
An ample port the rocks projected form, 1105
To break the rowling waves, and ruffling storm :

ψ. 1089. *Enquire not of his doom, etc.*] It may be asked, what is the reason of this conduct, and why should the phantom refuse to relate any thing concerning the condition of Ulysses? Eustathius answers, that if the phantom had related the full truth of the story, the poem had been at an end; the very constitution of it requires that Ulysses should arrive unknown to all, but chiefly to his wife, as will appear in the prosecution of the story : the question is very natural for an affectionate wife to make concerning an absent husband ; but this being an improper place for the discovery, the poet defers the solution of it, till the unravelling of the whole in the conclusion of the poem.

That safe recess they gain with happy speed,
And in close ambush wait the murd'rous deed.

The action of this book takes up the space of two nights and one day, so that from the opening of the poem to the introduction of Ulysses are six days completed.

But how long a time Telemachus afterwards stayed with Menelaus, is a question which has employed some modern French critics; one of which maintains, that he staid no longer than these two nights at Lacedaemon: but it is evident, from the sequel of the *Odyssey*, that Telemachus arrived again at Ithaca two days after Ulysses; but Ulysses was twenty-nine days in passing from Ogygia to Ithaca, and consequently during that whole time Telemachus must have been absent from Ithaca. The ground of that critic's mistake was from the silence of Homer as to the exact time of his stay, which was of no importance, being distinguished by no action, and only in an episodical part. The same thing led me into the like error in the 33d note on the second book, where it is said that Telemachus returned to Ithaca in less than twelve days.

T H E
O D Y S S E Y.
B O O K V.

T H E A R G U M E N T.

The departure of Ulysses from Calypso.

Pallas, in a council of the Gods, complains of the detention of Ulysses in the island of Calypso; whereupon Mercury is sent to command his removal. The seat of Calypso described. She consents with much difficulty, and Ulysses builds a vessel with his own hands, on which he embarks. Neptune overtakes him with a terrible tempest, in which he is ship-wrecked, and in the last danger of death; till Leucothea, a sea-goddeß, assists him, and after innumerable perils he gets ashore on Phaeacia.

THE saffron morn, with early blushes spread,
Now rose refulgent from Tithonus' bed;
With new-born day to gladden mortal sight,
And gild the courts of heav'n with sacred light.

N O T E S.

Ulysses makes his first entry in this book. It may be asked, where properly is the beginning of the action? It is not necessary that the beginning of the action should be the beginning of the poem; there is a natural and an artificial order, and Homer makes use of the latter. The action of the *Odyssey* properly begins neither with

Then met th' eternal synod of the sky,
 Before the God who thunders from on high,
 Supreme in might, sublime in majesty.
 Pallas, to these, deplores th' unequal fates
 Of wise Ulysses, and his toils relates ;
 Her hero's danger touch'd the pitying Pow'r,
 The nymph's seducements, and the magic bow'r.

the poem, nor with the appearance of Ulysses here, but with the relation he makes of his departure from Troy in the ninth book. Bossu has very judiciously remarked, that in the constitution of the fable, the poet ought not to make the departure of a prince from his own country the foundation of his poem, but his return, and his stay in other places involuntary. For if the stay of Ulysses had been voluntary, he would have been guilty, in some degree, of all the disorders that happened during his absence. Thus in this book Ulysses first appears in a desolate island, sitting in tears by the side of the ocean, and looking upon it as the obstacle to his return.

This artificial order is of great use ; it cuts off all languishing and unentertaining incidents, and passes over those intervals of time that are void of action ; it gives continuity to the story, and at first transports the reader into the middle of the subject. In the beginning of the *Odyssey*, the Gods command Mercury to go down to the island of Ogygia, and charge Calypso to dismiss Ulysses : one would think the poem was to end in the compass of a few lines, the poet beginning the action so near the end of the story ; and we wonder how he finds matter to fill up his poem, in the little space of time that intervenes between his first appearance and his re-establishment.

This book, as well as the first, opens with an assembly of the Gods. This is done to give an importance

Thus she began her plaint. Immortal Jove !
 And you who fill the blissful seats above !
 Let kings no more with gentle mercy sway,
 Or bless a people willing to obey, 15
 But crush the nations with an iron rod,
 And every monarch be the scourge of God :
 If from your thoughts Ulysses you remove,
 Who rul'd his subjects with a father's love.

to his poem, and to prepare the mind of the reader to expect every thing that is great and noble, when heaven is engaged in the care and protection of his heroes. Both these assemblies are placed very properly, so as not to interrupt the series of action : the first assembly of the Gods is only preparatory to introduce the action : and the second is no more than a bare transition from Telemachus to Ulysses ; from the recital of the transactions in Ithaca, to what more immediately regards the person of Ulysses.

In the former council, both the voyage of Telemachus and the return of Ulysses were determined at the same time : the day of that assembly is the first day both of the *principal action*, which is the return of Ulysses, and of the *incident*, which is the voyage of Telemachus ; with this difference, that the incident was immediately put in practice, by the descent of Minerva to Ithaca ; and the execution of it takes up the four preceding books ; whereas the principal action was only then prepared, and the execution deferred to the present book, where Mercury is actually sent to Calypso.

Eustathius therefore judges rightly when he says, that in the first council, the safety alone of Ulysses was proposed ; but the means how to bring it about are here under consultation, which makes the necessity of the second council.

Sole in an isle, encircled by the main, 20
 Abandon'd, banish'd from his native reign,
 Unblest he sighs, detain'd by lawless charms,
 And press'd unwilling in Calypso's arms.
 Nor friends are there, nor vessels to convey,
 Nor oars to cut th'immeasurable way. 25
 And now fierce traitors, studious to destroy
 His only son, their ambush'd fraud employ,
 Who pious, following his great father's fame,
 To sacred Pylos and to Sparta came. 29

What words are these (reply'd the Pow'r who forms
 The clouds of night, and darkens heav'n with storms)
 Is not already in thy soul decreed,
 The chief's return shall make the guilty bleed?
 What cannot wisdom do? Thou may'st restore
 The son in safety to his native shore; 35
 While the fell foes who late in ambush lay,
 With fraud defeated measure back their way.

Then thus to Hermes the command was giv'n.
 Hermes, thou chosen messenger of heav'n!
 Go, to the nymph be these our orders born: 40
 'Tis Jove's decree Ulysses shall return:
 The patient man shall view his old abodes,
 Nor help'd by mortal hand, nor guiding Gods;

[*ψ. 43. Nor help'd by mortal hand, nor guiding Gods.*]
 This passage is intricate: why should Jupiter command
 Ulysses to return without the guidance either of man or
 God? Ulysses had been just declared the care of heaven,
 why should he be thus suddenly abandoned? Eustathi-

In twice ten days shall fertile Scheria find,
Alone, and floating to the wave and wind. 45

us answers, that it is spoken solely with respect to the voyage which he immediately undertakes. This indeed shews a reason why this command is given; if he had been under the guidance of a god, the shipwreck (that great incident which brings about the whole catastrophe of the poem) must have been prevented by his power; and as for men, where were they to be procured in a desolate island? What confirms this opinion is, that during the whole shipwreck of Ulysses, there is no interpolation of a deity, nor even of Pallas, who used to be his constant guardian; the reason is, because this command of Jupiter forbids all assistance to Ulysses: Leucothea indeed assists him, but it is not till he is shipwrecked. It appears further, that this interdiction respects only the voyage from Ogygia, because Jupiter orders that there shall be no assistance from man, ὅτε δὲ αὖ πομπῇ, ἢ τ' ἀνθρώπων; but Ulysses is transported from Phaeacia to Ithaca, ἀνθρώπων πομπῇ, or by the assistance of the Phaeacians, as Eustathius observes; and therefore what Jupiter here speaks has relation only to the present voyage. Dacier understands this to be meant of any *visible* assistance only: but this seems a collusion; for whether the Gods assist visibly or invisibly, the effects are the same; and a deity unseen might have preserved Ulysses from storms, and directly guided him to his own country. But it was necessary for the design of Homer, that Ulysses should not sail directly home; if he had, there had been no room for the relation of his own adventures, and all those surprising narrations he makes to the Phaeacians; Homer therefore, to bring about the shipwreck of Ulysses, withdraws the Gods.

ψ. 45. *Alone, and floating to the wave.*] The word in the original is σκεδῖνος; νῆος, as Eustathius observes,

The bold Phaeacians there, whose haughty line
Is mixt with Gods, half human, half divine,

is understood: it signifies, continues he, a small vessel made of one entire piece of wood, or a vessel about which little wood is used; it is derived from *σχεδόν*, from being *ἀντοσχεδίως συμπεπῆχθαι*, or it being compacted together with ease. Hefychius defines *σχεδία* to be, *μικρά ναῦς ἢ ξύλα ἀ συνδύναι, καὶ ὕτω πλέυνσι*: that is, a small bark, or float of wood which sailors bind together, and immediately use in navigation. This observation appeared to me very necessary, to take off an objection made upon a following passage in this book: the critics have thought it incredible that Ulysses should, without any assistance, build such a vessel, as Homer describes; but if we remember what kind of a vessel it is, it may be reconciled to probability.

ψ. 46. — *Whose haughty line
Is mix'd with Gods.*]

The Phaeacians were the inhabitants of Scheria, sometimes called Drepane, afterwards Corcyra, now Corfu, in the possession of the Venetians. But it may be asked in what these people resemble the Gods? they are described as a most effeminate nation: whence then this God-like quality? Eustathius answers, that is either from their undisturbed felicity, or from their divine quality of general benevolence: he prefers the latter; but from the general character of the Phaeacians, I should prefer the former. Homer frequently describes the Gods as *ἀνὶ πέτρᾳ ζώντες*, *the Gods that live in endless ease*: this is suitable to the Phaeacians, as will appear more fully in the sequel of the Odyssey. Eustathius remarks, that the poet here gives us in a few lines the heads of the eight succeeding books; and sure nothing can be a greater instance of Homer's art, than his building so noble an edifice upon so small a foundation: the plan is simple and unadorned, but he embellishes it with all the beauties in nature.

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The chief shall honour as some heav'nly guest,
And swift transport him to his place of rest.

His vessels loaded with a plenteous store 50
Of brass, of vestures, and resplendent ore;

(A richer prize than if his joyful isle
Receiv'd him charg'd with Ilion's noble spoil)

His friends, his country he shall see, though late; 55
Such is our sovereign will, and such is fate.

He spoke. The God who mounts the winged winds
Fast to his feet the golden pinions binds,

That high through fields of air his flight sustain
O'er the wide earth, and o'er the boundless main.

He grasps the wand that causes sleep to fly, 60
Or in soft slumber seals the wakeful eye :

γ. 56. *The God who mounts the winged winds.*] This is a noble description of Mercury; the verses are lofty and sonorous. Virgil has inserted them in his *Æneis*, lib. iv. 240.

——— *pedibus talaria nectit*

Auræ : quæ sublimem alis, sive æquora supra,

Seu terram, rapido pariter cum flamine portant.

Tum virgam capit : hac animas ille evocat Orco

Pallentes, alias sub tristia Tartara mittit ;

Dat somnos adimitque, et lumina morte resignat.

What is here said of the rod of Mercury, is, as Eustathius observes, an allegory : it is intended to shew the force of eloquence, which has a power to calm, or excite, to raise a passion, or compose it : Mercury is the God of eloquence, and he may very properly be said *σελεῖν, καὶ ἀγείρειν*, to cool or inflame the passions according to the allegorical sense of these expressions.

Then shoots from heav'n to high Pieria's steep,
 And stoops incumbent on the rolling deep.
 So watry fowl, that seek their fishy food,
 With wings expanded o'er the foaming flood, 65
 Now sailing smooth the level surface sweep,
 Now dip their pinions in the briny deep.
 Thus o'er the world of waters Hermes flew,
 Till now the distant island rose in view :
 Then swift ascending from the azure wave, 70
 He took the path that winded to the cave.
 Large was the grot, in which the nymph he found,
 (The fair-hair'd nymph with ev'ry beauty crown'd)

ψ. 64. *So watry fowl.*] Eustathius remarks, that this is a very just allusion ; had the poet compared Mercury to an eagle, though the comparison had been more noble, yet it had been less proper : a sea-fowl most properly represents the passage of a deity over the seas ; the comparison being adapted to the element.

Some antient critics marked the last verse τῷ ἱκελός, etc. with an obelisk, a sign that it ought to be rejected : they thought that the word ὀχίσσατο did not sufficiently express the swiftness of the flight of Mercury ; the word implies no more than *he was carried* : but this expression is applicable to any degree of swiftness ; for where is the impropriety, if we say, Mercury was born along the seas with the utmost rapidity ? The word is most properly applied to a chariot, ἐπὶ ὄχῳ, ὃ ἐστὶν ἄρμαλος. Eustathius.

ψ. 72. *The nymph he found.*] Homer here introduces an episode of Calypso : and as every incident ought to have some relation to the main design of the poem, it may be asked, what relation this bears to the other parts of it ? A very essential one : the sufferings of Ulysses

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She sat and sung; the rocks resound her lays:
The cave was brighten'd with a rising blaze:

are the subject of the *Odyssey*: here we find him inclosed in an island: all his calamities arise from his absence from his own country: Calypso then who detains him is the cause of all his calamities. It is with great judgment that the poet feigns him to be restrained by a deity, rather than a mortal. It might have appeared somewhat derogatory from the prudence and courage of Ulysses, not to have been able, by art or strength, to have freed himself from the power of a mortal: but, by this conduct, the poet at once excuses his hero, and aggravates his misfortunes; he is detained involuntarily, but it is a goddess who detains him, and it is no disgrace for a man not to be able to overpower a deity.

Bossu observes, that the art of disguise is part of the character of Ulysses: now this is implied in the name of Calypso, which signifies *concealment*, or *secret*. The poet makes his hero stay seven whole years with this goddess; she taught him so well, that he afterwards lost no opportunities of putting her instructions in practice, and does nothing without disguise.

Virgil has borrowed part of his description of Circe in the 7th book of the *Æneis*, from this of Calypso.

— ubi Solis filia lucos

Affiduo resonat cantu, tectisque superbis

Urit odoratam nocturna in lumina cedrum,

Arguto tenues percurrens pectine telas.

What I have here said shews likewise the necessity of this machine of Mercury: it is an established rule of Horace:

Nec deus interfit, nisi dignus vindice nodus

Inciderit.

Calypso was a goddess, and consequently all human

Cedar and frankincense, an od'rous pile,
 Flam'd on the hearth, and wide perfum'd the isle;
 While she with work and song the time divides,
 And through the loom the golden shuttle guides,
 Without the grot, a various sylvan scene 80
 Appear'd around, and groves of living green;
 Poplars and alders ever quiv'ring play'd,
 And nodding cypress form'd a fragrant shade;
 On whose high branches, waving with the storm,
 The birds of broadest wing their mansion form, 85
 The chough, the sea-mew, the loquacious crow,
 And scream aloft, and skim the deeps below.
 Depending vines the shelving cavern screen,
 With purple clusters blushing through the green.

means were insufficient to deliver Ulysses. There was therefore a necessity to have recourse to the Gods.

ψ. 80. *The bower of Calypso.*] It is impossible for a painter to draw a more admirable rural landship: the bower of Calypso is the principal figure, surrounded with a shade of different trees: green meadows, adorned with flowers, beautiful fountains, and vines loaded with clusters of grapes, and birds hovering in the air, are seen in the liveliest colours in Homer's poetry. But whoever observes the particular trees, plants, birds, etc. will find another beauty of propriety in this description, every part being adapted, and the whole scene drawn agreeable to a country situate by the sea.

ψ. 89. *The purple clusters blushing through the green.*] Eustathius endeavours to fix the season of the year when Ulysses departed from that island: he concludes it to be in the latter end of autumn, or the beginning of winter; for Calypso is described as making use of a fire; so is

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Four limpid fountains from the clefts distill,
 And every fountain pours a sev'ral rill,
 In mazy windings wand'ring down the hill :
 Where bloomy meads with vivid greens were crown'd,
 And glowing violets threw odors round.
 A scene, where if a God should cast his sight, 95
 A God might gaze, and wander with delight !
 Joy touch'd the messenger of heav'n : he stay'd
 Entranc'd, and all the blisful haunt survey'd.
 Him, ent'ring in the cave, Calypso knew,
 For pow'rs celestial to each other's view 100
 Stand still confest, though distant far they lie
 Or habitants of earth, or sea or sky.
 But sad Ulysses by himself apart,
 Pour'd the big sorrows of his swelling heart ;

Arete in the sixth book, and Eumaeus and Ulysses in other parts of the *Odyssey*. This gives us reason to conclude, that the summer heats were past ; and what makes it still more probable is, that a vine is in this place said to be loaded with grapes, which plainly confines the season of the year to the autumn.

ψ. 103. *But sad Ulysses by himself apart.*] Eustathius imagines, that the poet describes Ulysses absent from Calypso, to the end that Calypso might lay a seeming obligation upon Ulysses, by appearing to dismiss him voluntarily : for Ulysses being absent, could not know that Mercury had commanded his departure ; so that this favour appears to proceed from the sole kindness of the goddess. Dacier dislikes this observation, and shews that decency requires the absence of Ulysses ; if the poet had described him in the company of Calypso, it might have given suspicion of an amorous disposition,

All on the lonely shore he sat to weep, 105
 And roll'd his eyes around the restless deep ;
 Tow'rd his lov'd coast he roll'd his eyes in vain,
 Till dimm'd with rising grief, they stream'd again.

Now graceful seated on her shining throne,
 To Hermes thus the nymph divine begun. 110

God of the golden wand ! on what behest
 Arriv'st thou here, an unexpected guest ?
 Lov'd as thou art, thy free injunctions lay :
 'Tis mine, with joy and duty to obey.
 Till now a stranger, in a happy hour 115
 Approach, and taste the dainties of my bow'r.

Thus having spoke, the nymph the table spread,
 (Ambrosial cates, with nectar rosie red)
 Hermes the hospitable rite partook,
 Divine refection ! then recruited, spoke. 120

What mov'd this journey from my native sky,
 A goddess asks, nor can a God deny :
 Hear then the truth. By mighty Jove's command
 Unwilling, have I trod this pleasing land ;

and he might seem content with his absence from his country : but the very nature of the poem requires that he should be continually endeavouring to return to it : the poet therefore, with great judgment, describes him agreeably to his character, his mind is entirely taken up with his misfortunes, and neglecting all the pleasures which a goddess could confer, he entertains himself with his own melancholy reflections, sitting in solitude upon the sea-shores.

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Book V. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 253

For who, self-mov'd, with weary wing would sweep
Such length of ocean and unmeasur'd deep? 126

A world of waters! far from all the ways
Where men frequent, or sacred altars blaze.

But to Jove's will submission we must pay;
What pow'r so great, to dare to disobey? 130

A man, he says, a man resides with thee,
Of all his kind most worn with misery:

The Greeks (whose arms for nine long years employ'd
Their force on Ilion, in the tenth destroy'd)

At length embarking in a luckless hour, 135
With conquest proud, incens'd Minerva's pow'r:

Hence on the guilty race her vengeance hurl'd,
With storms pursued them through the liquid world.

There all his vessels sunk beneath the wave!
There all his dear companions found their grave! 140

Sav'd from the jaws of death by heav'n's decree,
The tempest drove him to these shores and thee.

Him, Jove now orders to his native lands
Strait to dismiss; so destiny commands:

Impatient fate his near return attends, 145
And calls him to his country, and his friends.

Ev'n to her inmost soul the goddess shook;
Then thus her anguish and her passion broke.

Ungracious Gods! with spite and envy curst!
Still to your own aethereal race the worst! 150

Ye envy mortal and immortal joy,
And love, the only sweet of life, destroy.

Did ever goddess by her charms ingage
 A favour'd mortal, and not feel your rage?
 So when Aurora sought Orion's love, 155
 Her joys disturb'd your blissful hours above,
 Till in Ortygia, Dian's winged dart
 Had pierc'd the hapless hunter to the heart.
 So when the covert of the thrice ear'd field
 Saw stately Ceres to her passion yield, 160
 Scarce could Iasion taste her heav'nly charms,
 But Jove's swift lightning scorch'd him in her arms.

ψ. 155. *Orion.*] The love of Calypso to Ulysses might seem too bold a fiction, and contrary to all credibility, Ulysses being a mortal, she a goddess: Homer therefore to soften the relation, brings in instances of the like passion, in Orion and Iasion; and by this he fully justifies his own conduct, the poet being at liberty to make use of any prevailing story, though it were all fable and fiction.

But why should the death of Orion be here ascribed to Diana; whereas in other places, she is said to exercise her power only over women? The reason is, she slew him for offering violence to her chastity; for though Homer be silent about his crime, yet Horace relates it.

— *Integræ*
Tentator Orion Dianæ
Virginea domitus sagitta.

Eustathius gives another reason why Aurora is said to be in love with Orion. He was a great hunter, as appears from the eleventh book of the *Odyssey*; and the morning or Aurora is most favourable to those diversions.

ψ. 161. *Scarce could Iasion, etc.*] Ceres is here understood allegorically, to signify the earth; Iasion was

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And is it now my turn, ye mighty pow'rs !

Am I the envy of your blissful bow'rs ?

A man, an outcast to the storm and wave, 165

It was my crime to pity, and to save ;

When he who thunders rent his bark in twain,

And sunk his brave companions in the main.

a great husbandman, and consequently Ceres may easily be feigned to be in love with him : the thunderbolt with which he is slain, signifies the excess of heat, which frequently disappoints the hopes of the labourer. Eustathius.

ψ. 165. *A man, an outcast to the storm and wave,
It was my crime to pity, and to save, etc.]*

Homer in this speech of Calypso shews very naturally how passion misguides the understanding. She views her own cause in the most advantageous, but false light, and thence concludes, that Jupiter offers a piece of injustice in commanding the departure of Ulysses: she tells Mercury, that it is she who had preserved his life, who had entertained him with affection, and offered him immortality; and would Jupiter thus repay her tenderness to Ulysses? Would Jupiter force him from a place where nothing was wanting to his happiness, and expose him again to the like dangers from which she had preserved him? this was an act of cruelty. But on the contrary, she speaks not one word concerning the truth of the cause: viz. that she offered violence to the inclinations of Ulysses; that she made him miserable by detaining him, not only from his wife, but from his whole dominions; and never considers that Jupiter is just in delivering him from his captivity. This is a very lively, though unhappy picture of human nature, which is too apt to fall into error, and then endeavours to justify an error by a seeming reason. Dacier.

Alone, abandon'd, in mid ocean tost,
 The sport of winds, and driv'n from ev'ry coast, 170
 Hither this man of miseries I led,
 Receiv'd the friendless, and the hungry fed;
 Nay promis'd (vainly promis'd!) to bestow
 Immortal life, exempt from age and woe.
 'Tis past——and Jove decrees he shall remove; 175
 Gods as we are, we are but slaves to Jove.
 Go then he may (he must, if he ordain)
 Try all those dangers, all those deeps, again.
 But never, never shall Calypso send
 To toils like these, her husband and her friend. 180
 What ships have I, what sailors to convey,
 What oars to cut the long laborious way?
 Yet, I'll direct the safest means to go:
 That last advice is all I can bestow.

To her, the Pow'r who bears the charming rod. 185
 Dismiss the man, nor irritate the God;
 Prevent the rage of him who reigns above,
 For what so dreadful as the wrath of Jove?
 Thus having said, he cut the cleaving sky,
 And in a moment vanish'd from her eye. 190
 The nymph, obedient to divine command,
 To seek Ulysses, pac'd along the sand.
 Him pensive on the lonely beach she found
 With streaming eyes in briny torrents drown'd,
 And inly pining for his native shore; 195
 For now the soft enchantress pleas'd no more:

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For now, reluctant, and constrain'd by charms,
 Absent he lay in her desiring arms,
 In slumber wore the heavy night away,
 On rocks and shores consum'd the tedious day ; 200
 There sat all desolate, and sigh'd alone,
 With echoing sorrows made the mountains groan,
 And roll'd his eyes o'er all the restless main,
 Till dim'd with rising grief, they stream'd again.

y. 198. *Absent he lay in her desiring arms.*] This passage has fallen under the severe censure of the critics, they condemn it as an act of conjugal infidelity, and a breach of morality in Ulysses : it would be sufficient to answer, that a poet is not obliged to draw a perfect character in the person of his hero : perfection is not to be found in human life, and consequently ought not to be ascribed to it in poetry : neither Achilles nor Æneas are perfect characters : Æneas in particular is as guilty, with respect to Dido, in the desertion of her, (for Virgil tells us they were married, *connubio jungam stabili*) as Ulysses can be imagined to be by the most severe critic, with respect to Calypso.

But those, who have blamed this passage, form their judgments from the morality of these ages, and not from the theology of the antients : polygamy was then allowed, and even concubinage, without being esteemed any breach of conjugal fidelity : if this be not admitted, the heathen Gods are as guilty as the heathen heroes, and Jupiter and Ulysses are equally criminals.

This very passage shews the sincere affection which Ulysses retained for his wife Penelope ; even a goddess cannot persuade him to forget her ; his person is in the power of Calypso, but his heart is with Penelope. Tully had this book of Homer in his thought when he said of Ulysses, *Vetulam suam prætulit immortalitati.*

Here, on his musing mood the goddess prest, 205
Approaching soft; and thus the chief address.

Unhappy man! to wasting woes a prey,
No more in sorrows languish life away:

Free as the winds I give thee now to rove—
Go, fell the timber of yon' lofty grove, 210

And form a raft, and build the rising ship,
Sublime to bear thee o'er the gloomy deep.

To store the vessel let the care be mine,
With water from the rock, and rosy wine,

And life sustaining bread, and fair array, 215
And prosp'rous gales to waft thee on thy way.

These, if the Gods with my desires comply,
(The Gods, alas! more mighty far than I,

And better skill'd in dark events to come)
In peace shall land thee at thy native home. 220

With sighs, Ulysses heard the words she spoke,
Then thus his melancholy silence broke.

ψ. 222. *Then thus his melancholy silence broke.*] It may be asked what occasions this conduct in Ulysses? he has long been desirous to return to his country, why then is he melancholy at the proposal of it? This proceeds from his apprehensions of insincerity in Calypso: he had long been unable to obtain his dismissal with the most urgent entreaties: this voluntary kindness therefore seems suspicious. He is ignorant that Jupiter had commanded his departure, and therefore fears lest his obstinate desire of leaving her should have provoked her to destroy him, under a shew of complying with his inclinations. This is an instance that Ulysses is not only wise in extricating himself from difficulties, but cautious in guarding against dangers.

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Some other motive, goddess! sways thy mind,
(Some close design, or turn of womankind)

Nor my return the end, nor this the way,
On a slight raft to pass the swelling sea

Huge, horrid, vast! where scarce in safety fails
The best built ship, though Jove inspire the gales.

The bold proposal how shall I fulfill?

Dark as I am, unconscious of thy will. 230

Swear then, thou mean'st not what my soul forbodes;

Swear, by the solemn oath that binds the Gods.

Him, while he spoke, with smiles Calypso ey'd,
And gently grasp'd his hand, and thus reply'd.

This shews thee, friend, by old experience taught, 235

And learn'd in all the wiles of human thought.

How prone to doubt, how cautious are the wise?

But hear, oh earth, and hear, ye sacred skies!

ψ. 238. *But hear, oh earth, and hear, ye sacred skies!*

The oath of Calypso is introduced with the utmost solemnity. Rapin allows it to be an instance of true sublimity. The antients attested all nature in their oaths, that all nature might conspire to punish their perjuries. Virgil has imitated this passage, but has not copied the full beauty of the original.

Esto nunc sol testis, et haec mihi terra precanti.

It is the remark of Grotius, that the like expression is found in Deuteronomy, *Hear, oh ye heavens, the words that I speak, and let the earth hear the words of my mouth.* Which may almost literally be rendered by this verse of Homer.

"Ἰσὼ νῦν τὸδε γαῖα, καὶ ὕψανός ἐσσις ὕπερθε.

And thou, oh Styx ! whose formidable floods
 Glide through the shades, and bind th' attesting Gods !
 No form'd design, no meditated end 241
 Lurks in the counsel of thy faithful friend ;
 Kind the persuasion, and sincere my aim ;
 The same my practice, were my fate the same.
 Heav'n has not curst me with a heart of steel. 145
 But giv'n the sense, to pity and to feel.

Thus having said, the goddess march'd before :
 He trod her footsteps in the sandy shore.
 At the cool cave arriv'd, they took their state ;
 He fill'd the throne where Mercury had fate, 250
 For him, the nymph a rich repast ordains,
 Such as the mortal life of man sustains ;

ψ. 251. *For him, the nymph a rich repast ordains.*]
 The passion of love is no where described in all Homer,
 but in this passage between Calypso and Ulysses ; and
 we find that the poet is not unsuccessful in drawing the
 tender, as well as the fiercer passions. This seemingly
 trifling circumstance is an instance of it ; love delights
 to oblige, and the least offices receive a value from the
 person who performs them : this is the reason why Ca-
 lypso serves Ulysses with her own hands : her damsels
 attend her, but love makes it a pleasure to her to attend
 Ulysses. Eustathius.

Calypso shews more fondness for Ulysses, than Ulysses
 for Calypso : indeed Ulysses had been no less than
 seven years in the favour of that goddess ; it was a kind
 of matrimony, and husbands are not altogether so fond
 as lovers. But the true reason is, a more tender be-
 haviour had been contrary to the character of Ulysses ;
 it is necessary that his stay should be by constraint, that

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Before herself were plac'd the cates divine,
 Ambrosial banquet, and celestial wine.
 Their hunger satiate, and their thirst repress, 255
 Thus spoke Calypso to her god-like guest.

Ulysses! (with a sigh she thus began)
 Oh sprung from Gods! in wisdom more than man.
 Is then thy home the passion of thy heart?
 Thus wilt thou leave me, are we thus to part? 260
 Farewel! and ever joyful may'st thou be,
 Nor break the transport with one thought of me.
 But, ah Ulysses! wert thou given to know
 What fate yet dooms thee, yet, to undergo;

he should continually be endeavouring to return to his own country; and consequently to have discovered too great a degree of satisfaction in any thing during his absence, had outraged his character. His return is the main hinge upon which the whole *Odyssey* turns, and therefore no pleasure, not even a goddess, ought to divert him from it.

*ψ. 263. But, ah Ulysses! wert thou giv'n to know
 What fate yet dooms thee.]*

This is another instance of the tyranny of the passion of love: Calypso had received a command to dismiss Ulysses; Mercury had laid before her the fatal consequences of her refusal, and she had promised to send him away; but her love here again prevails over her reason; she frames excuses still to detain him, and though she dares not keep him, she knows not how to part with him. This is a true picture of nature; love this moment resolves, the next breaks these resolutions: she had promised to obey Jupiter, in not detaining Ulysses; but she endeavours to persuade Ulysses not to go away.

Thy heart might settle in this scene of ease, 265

And ev'n these slighted charms might learn to please.

A willing goddess and immortal life

Might banish from thy mind an absent wife.

Am I inferior to a mortal dame?

Less soft my feature, less august my frame? 270

Or shall the daughters of mankind compare

Their earth-born beauties with the heav'nly fair?

Alas! for this (the prudent man replies)

Against Ulysses shall thy anger rise?

Lov'd and ador'd, oh goddess as thou art, 275

Forgive the weakness of a human heart.

Though well I see thy graces far above

The dear, though mortal, object of my love,

Of youth eternal well the difference know,

And the short date of fading charms below; 280

Yet ev'ry day, while absent thus I roam,

I languish to return, and dye at home.

ψ. 277. *Though well I see thy graces far above*

The dear, though mortal, object of my love.]

Ulysses shews great address in this answer to Calypso; he softens the severity of it, by first asking a favourable acceptance of what he is about to say; he calls her his adored goddess, and places Penelope in every degree below the perfections of Calypso. As it is the nature of women not to endure a rival, Ulysses assigns the desire of his return to another cause than the love of Penelope, and ascribes it solely to the love he bears his country. Eustathius.

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Book V. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 263

Whate'er the Gods shall destine me to bear
In the black ocean, or the wat'ry war,
'Tis mine to master with a constant mind ; 285
Enur'd to perils, to the worst resign'd.
By seas, by wars, so many dangers run,
Still I can suffer, their high will be done !

Thus while he spoke, the beamy sun descends,
And rising night her friendly shade extends. 290
To the close grot the lonely pair remove,
And slept delighted with the gifts of love.
When rosy morning call'd them from their rest,
Ulysses rob'd him in the cloak and vest.
The nymph's fair head a veil transparent grac'd, 295
Her swelling loins a radiant zone embrac'd
With flow'rs of gold : an under robe, unbound,
In snowy waves flow'd glitt'ring on the ground.
Forth-issuing thus, she gave him first to wield
A weighty axe, with trust temper steel'd, 300
And double-edg'd ; the handle smooth and plain,
Wrought of the clouded olive's easy grain ;
And next, a wedge to drive with sweepy sway :
Then to the neighbouring forest led the way.
On the lone island's utmost verge there stood 305
Of poplars, pines, and firs, a lofty wood,
Whose leafless summits to the skies aspire,
Scorch'd by the sun, or fear'd by heav'nly fire :
(Already dry'd.) These pointing out to view,
The nymph just shew'd him, and with tears withdrew.

Now toils the hero : trees on trees o'erthrown 311
 Fall crackling round him, and the forests groan :
 Sudden, full twenty on the plain are strow'd,
 And lopp'd, and lighten'd of their branchy load.

γ. 311, etc. *Ulysses builds his ship.*] This passage has fallen under censure, as outraging all probability: Rabin believes it to be impossible for one man alone to build so complete a vessel in the compass of four days; and perhaps the same opinion might lead Bossu into a mistake, who allows twenty days to Ulysses in building it; he applies the word *ἑξήκοντα*, or *twenty*, to the days, which ought to be applied to the trees; *διδρα* is understood, for the poet immediately after declares that the whole was completed in the space of four days; neither is there any thing incredible in the description. I have observed already that this vessel is but *Σχιδια*, a *float*, or *raft*; it is true, Ulysses cuts down twenty trees to build it; this may seem too great a provision of materials for so small an undertaking: but why should we imagine these to be large trees? the description plainly shews the contrary, for it had been impossible to have felled twenty large trees in the space of four days, much more to have built a vessel proportionable to such materials: but the vessel was but small, and consequently such were the trees. Homer call these *dry trees*; this is not inserted without reason, for green wood is unfit for navigation.

Homer, in this passage, shews his skill in mechanics; a shipwright could not have described a vessel more exactly; but what is chiefly valuable is the insight it gives us to what degree this art of ship-building was then arrived: we find likewise what use navigators made of astronomy in those ages; so that this passage deserves a double regard, as a fine piece of poetry, and a valuable remain of antiquity.

At equal angles these dispos'd to join, 315

He smooth'd, and squar'd 'em, by the rule and line.

(The wimbles for the work Calypso found)

With those he pierc'd them, and with clinchers bound.

Long and capacious as a shipwright forms

Some bark's broad bottom to outride the storms, 320

So large he built the raft: then ribb'd it strong

From space to space, and nail'd the planks along:

These form'd the sides: the deck he fashion'd last;

Then o'er the vessel rais'd the taper mast,

With crossing sail-yards dancing in the wind; 325

And to the helm the guiding rudder join'd.

(With yielding osiers fenc'd, to break the force

Of surging waves, and steer the steady course)

Thy loom, Calypso! for the future sails

Supply'd the cloth, capacious of the gales. 330

℥. 317. *The wimbles for the work Calypso found.* and

℥. 329. *Thy loom, Calypso, for the future sails*

Supply'd the cloth.]

It is remarkable that Calypso brings the tools to Ulysses at several times: this is another instance of the nature of love; it seeks opportunities to be in the company of the beloved person. Calypso is an instance of it: she frequently goes away, and frequently returns: she delays the time, by not bringing all the implements at once to Ulysses; so that though she cannot divert him from his resolutions of leaving her, yet she protracts his stay.

It may be necessary to make some observation in general upon this passage of Calypso and Ulysses. Mr. Dryden has been very severe upon it. 'What are the tears,' says he, of Calypso for being left, to the fury and

With stays and cordage lapt he rigg'd the ship,
And roll'd on leavers, launch'd her in the deep.

' death of Dido ? Where is there the whole process of
' her passion, and all its violent effects to be found, in
' the languishing episode of the *Odyssey* ?' Much may
be said in vindication of Homer ; there is a wide differ-
ence between the characters of Dido and Calypso. Ca-
lypso is a goddess, and consequently not liable to the
same passions, as an enraged woman : yet disappointed
love being always an outrageous passion, Homer makes
her break out into blasphemies against Jupiter and all the
Gods. ' But the same process of love is not found in
' Homer as in Virgil ;' it is true, and Homer had been
very injudicious if he had inserted it. The time allows
it not ; it was necessary for Homer to describe the con-
clusion of Calypso's passion, not the beginning or pro-
cess of it. It was necessary to carry on the main de-
sign of the poem, viz. the departure of Ulysses, in or-
der to his re-establishment ; and not amuse the reader
with the detail of a passion that was so far from contri-
buting to the end of the poem, that it was the greatest
impediment to it. If the poet had found an enlargement
necessary to his design, had he attempted a full de-
scription of the passion, and then failed, Mr. Dryden's
criticism had been judicious. Virgil had a fair opportu-
nity to expatiate, nay, the occasion required it, inasmuch
as the love of Dido contributed to the design of the
poem ; it brought about her assistance to Æneas, and
the preservation of his companions ; and consequently
the copiousness of Virgil is as judicious as the concise-
ness of Homer. I allow Virgil's to be a masterpiece :
perhaps no images are more happily drawn in all that
poet ; but the passages in the two authors are not simi-
lar, and consequently admit of no comparison : would
it not have been insufferable in Homer, to have stepped
seven years backward, to describe the process of Ca-

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Four days were past, and now the work compleat
 Shone the fifth mora: when from her sacred seat
 The nymph dismiss him, (od'rous garments giv'n, 335
 And bath'd in fragrant oils that breath'd of heav'n)
 Then fill'd two goat-skins with her hands divine,
 With water one, and one with sable wine:
 Of ev'ry kind provisions heav'd aboard,
 And the full decks with copious viands stor'd, 340
 The goddess last a gentle breeze supplies,
 To curl old Ocean, and to warm the skies.

And now rejoicing in the prosp'rous gales,
 With beating heart Ulysses spreads his sails;

Calypso's passion, when the very nature of the poem requires that Ulysses should immediately return to his own country? ought the action to be suspended for a fine description? But an opposite conduct was judicious in both the poets, and therefore Virgil is commendable for giving us the whole process of a love-passion in Dido, Homer for only relating the conclusion of it in Calypso. I will only add, that Virgil has borrowed his machinery from Homer, and that the departure of Æneas and Ulysses is brought about by the command of Jupiter, and the descent of Mercury.

§. 344. — *Ulysses spreads his sails*] It is observable that the poet passes over the parting of Calypso and Ulysses in silence; he leaves it to be imagined by the reader, and prosecutes his main action. Nothing but a cold complement could have proceeded from Ulysses, he being overjoyed at the prospect of returning to his country: it was therefore judicious in Homer to omit the relation: and not draw Calypso in tears, and Ulysses in a transport of joy. Besides, it was necessary to shorten the episode: the commands of Jupiter were

Plac'd at the helm he sat, and mark'd the skies, 345
 Nor clos'd in sleep his ever watchful eyes.
 There view'd the Pleiads, and the northern Team
 And great Orion's more refulgent beam,
 To which, around the axle of the sky
 The Bear revolving, points his golden eye: 350
 Who shines exalted on th' ethereal plain,
 Nor bathes his blazing forehead in the main.
 Far on the left those radiant fires to keep
 The nymph directed, as he sail'd the deep.
 Full sev'nteen nights he cut the foamy way; 355
 The distant land appear'd the following day:

immediately to be obeyed; and the story being now turned to Ulysses, it was requisite to put him immediately upon action, and describe him endeavouring to re-establish his own affairs, which is the whole design of the *Odyssey*.

ψ. 355. *Full sev'nteen nights he cut the foamy way.*]

It may seem incredible, that one person should be able to manage a vessel seventeen days without any assistance; but Eustathius vindicates Homer by an instance that very much resembles this of Ulysses. A certain Pamphylian being taken prisoner, and carried to Tamiathis (afterwards Damietta) in Ægypt, continued there several years; but being continually desirous to return to his country, he pretends a skill in sea affairs; this succeeds, and he is immediately employed in maritime business, and permitted the liberty to follow it according to his own inclination, without any inspection. He made use of this opportunity, and furnishing himself with a sail, and provisions for a long voyage, committed himself to the sea all alone; he crossed that vast extent of waters that lies between Ægypt and Pamphylia, and arrived safely in his own country: in memory of this

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Then swell'd to sight Phaeacia's dusky coast,
And woody mountains, half in vapours lost :
That lay before him, indistinct and vast,
Like a broad shield amid the wat'ry waste. 360

But him, thus voyaging the deeps below,
From far, on Solyme's aerial brow,

prodigious event he changed his name, and was called *μονοναύτης*, or the *sole-sailor*; and the family was not extinct in the days of Eustathius.

It may not be improper to observe, that this description of Ulysses sailing alone is a demonstration of the smallness of his vessel; for it is impossible that a large one could be managed by a single person. It is indeed said that twenty trees were taken down for the vessel, but this does not imply that all the trees were made use of, but only so much of them as was necessary to his purpose.

ψ. 360. *Like a broad shield amid the wat'ry waste.*] This expression gives a very lively idea of an island of small extent, that is of a form more long than large: Aristarchus, instead of *ῥινόν*, writes *ῥρινόν*, or resembling a *fig*; others tell us, that *ῥινόν* is used by the Illyrians to signify *ἀχλὺν*, or a *mist*; this likewise very well represents the first appearance of land to those that sail at a distance; it appears indistinct and confused, or, as it is here expressed, like a mist. Eustathius.

ψ. 362. *From Solyme's aerial brow.*] There is some difficulty in this passage. Strabo, as Eustathius observes, affirms that the expression of Neptune's seeing Ulysses from the mountains of Solyme, is to be taken in a general sense, and not to denote the Solymeian mountains in Pisidia; but other eastern mountains that bear the same appellation. In propriety, the Solymaeans inhabit the summits of mount Taurus, from Lycia even to Pisidia; these were very distant from the passage of Nep-

The king of Ocean saw, and seeing burn'd,
 (From Æthiopia's happy climes return'd)
 The raging monarch shook his azure head, 365
 And thus in secret to his soul he said.

Heav'ns! how uncertain are the Pow'rs on high!
 Is then revers'd the sentence of the sky,
 In one man's favour? while a distant guest
 I shar'd secure the Æthiopian feast. 370

Behold how near Phaeacia's land he draws!
 The land, affix'd by fate's eternal laws
 To end his toils. Is then our anger vain?
 No, if this sceptre yet commands the main.

He spoke, and high the forky trident hurl'd, 375
 Rolls clouds on clouds, and stirs the wat'ry world,
 At once the face of earth and sea deforms,
 Swells all the winds, and rouses all the storms.

tune from the Æthiopians, and consequently could not be the mountains intended by Homer; we must therefore have recourse to the preceding assertion of Strabo, for a solution of the difficulty. Dacier endeavours to explain it another way; Who knows, says she, but that the name of Solymean was antiently extended to all very elevated mountains? Bochart affirms, that the word *Solimy* is derived from the Hebrew *Selem*, or *darkness*; why then might not this be a general appellation? But this is all conjecture, and it is much more probable that such a name should be given to some mountains by way of distinction and emphatically, from some peculiar and extraordinary quality; than extend it to all very lofty mountains, which could only introduce confusion and error.

Book V.
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Down rush'd the night. East, west, together roar,
And south, and north, roll mountains to the shore;
Then shook the hero, to despair resign'd, 381
And question'd thus his yet unconquer'd mind.

Wretch that I am! what farther fates attend
This life of toils, and what my destin'd end?
Too well alas! the island goddess knew, 385
On the black sea what perils should ensue.
New horrors now this destin'd head enclose;
Unfill'd is yet the measure of my woes.
With what a cloud the brows of heav'n are crown'd?
What raging winds? what roaring waters round?
'Tis Jove himself the swelling tempest rears; 391
Death, present death, on every side appears.
Happy! thrice happy! who in battle slain
Prest in Atrides' cause the Trojan plain:

ψ. 393. *Happy! thrice happy! who in battle slain,
Prest in Atrides' cause the Trojan plain.]*

Plutarch, in his *Symposiacs*, relates a memorable story concerning Memmius, the Roman general: when he had sacked the city Corinth, and made slaves of those who survived the ruin of it, he commanded one of the youths, of a liberal education, to write down some sentence in his presence, according to his own inclinations. The youth immediately wrote this passage from Homer.

*Happy! thrice happy! who in battle slain,
Prest in Atrides' cause the Trojan plain.]*

Memmius immediately burst into tears, and gave the youth and all his relations their liberty.

Virgil has translated this passage in the first book of his *Æneis*. The storm and the behaviour of Æneas are copied exactly from it. The storm, in both the

Oh! had I dy'd before that well-fought wall; 395
 Had some distinguish'd day renown'd my fall;
 (Such as was that, when show'rs of jav'lins fled
 From conqu'ring Troy around Achilles dead)
 All Greece had paid my solemn fun'ral's then,
 And spread my glory with the sons of men. 400

poets, is described concisely, but the images are full of terror; Homer leads the way, and Virgil treads in his steps without any deviation. Ulysses falls into lamentation, so does Æneas: Ulysses wishes he had found a nobler death, so does Æneas: this discovers a bravery of spirit, they lament not that they are to die, but only the inglorious manner of it. This fully answers an objection that has been made both against Homer and Virgil, who have been blamed for describing their heroes with such an air of mean-spiritedness. Drowning was esteemed by the antients an accursed death, as it deprived their bodies of the rites of sepulture; it is therefore no wonder that this kind of death was greatly dreaded, since it barred their entrance into the happy regions of the dead for many hundreds of years.

ψ 397. *Such as was that, when show'rs of jav'lins fled
 From conqu'ring Troy around Achilles dead.*]

These words have relation to an action, no where described in the Iliad or Odyssey. When Achilles was slain by the treachery of Paris, the Trojans made a sally to gain his body, but Ulysses carried it off upon his shoulders, while Ajax protected him with his shield. The war of Troy is not the subject of the Iliad, and therefore relates not the death of Achilles; but, as Longinus remarks, he inserts many actions in the Odyssey which are the sequel of the story of the Iliad. This conduct has a very happy effect; he aggrandizes the character of Ulysses by these short histories, and has found out the way to make him praise himself, without vanity.

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A shameful fate now hides my hapless head,
Un-wept, un-noted, and for ever dead !

A mighty wave rush'd o'er him as he spoke,
The raft it cover'd, and the mast it broke ;
Swept from the deck, and from the rudder torn, 405
Far on the swelling surge the chief was born :

While by the howling tempest rent in twain
Flew sail and sail-yards ratling o'er the main.
Long press'd he heav'd beneath the weighty wave,
Clogg'd by the cumbrous vest Calypso gave : 410

At length emerging, from his nostrils wide
And gushing mouth, effus'd the briny tide.
Ev'n then, not mindless of his last retreat,
He seiz'd the raft, and leapt into his seat,
Strong with the fear of death. The rolling flood 415
Now here, now there, impell'd the floating wood.

As when a heap of gather'd thorns is cast
Now to, now fro, before th' autumnal blast ;
Together clung, it rolls around the field ;
So roll'd the float, and so its texture held : 420
And now the south, and now the north, bear sway,
And now the east the foamy floods obey,
And now the west-wind whirls it o'er the sea.

The wand'ring Chief, with toils on toils oppress'd,
Leucothea saw, and pity touch'd her breast :

Y. 424. *The wand'ring Chief, with toils on toils oppress'd,
Leucothea saw, and pity touch'd her breast.*]

It is not probable that Ulysses could escape so great a danger by his own strength alone; and therefore the poet

(Herself a mortal once, of Cadmus' strain,
 But now an azure sister of the main)
 Swift as a sea-mew springing from the flood,
 All radiant on the raft the goddess stood :
 Then thus address'd him. Thou, whom heav'n decrees
 To Neptune's wrath, stern tyrant of the seas, 431
 (Unequal contest) not his rage and pow'r,
 Great as he is, such virtue shall devour.
 What I suggest thy wisdom will perform ;
 Forsake thy float, and leave it to the storm ; 435
 Strip off thy garments ; Neptune's fury brave
 With naked strength, and plunge into the wave.
 To reach Phaeacia all thy nerves extend,
 There Fate decrees thy miseries shall end.
 This heav'nly scarf beneath thy bosom bind, 440
 And live ; give all thy terrors to the wind.

introduces Leucothea to assist in his preservation. But it may be asked, if this is not contradictory to the command of Jupiter in the beginning of this book ? Ulysses is there forbid all assistance either from men or Gods ; whence then is it that Leucothea preserves him ? The former passage is to be understood to imply an interdiction only of all assistance till Ulysses was shipwrecked ; he was to suffer, not to die : thus Pallas afterwards calms the storm ; she may be imagined to have a power over the winds, as she is the daughter of Jupiter, who denotes the air, according to the observation of Eustathius : here Leucothea is very properly introduced to preserve Ulysses ; she is a sea-goddess, and had been a mortal, and therefore interests herself in the cause of a mortal.

γ. 440. *This heav'nly scarf beneath thy bosom bind.]*

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Soon as thy arms the happy shore shall gain,
 Return the gift, and cast it in the main ;
 Observe my orders, and with heed obey,
 Cast it far off; and turn thy eyes away. 445

With that, her hand the sacred veil bestows,
 Then down the deeps she div'd from whence she rose :
 A moment snatch'd the shining form away,
 And all was cover'd with the curling sea.

This passage may seem extraordinary, and the poet be thought to preserve Ulysses by incredible means. What virtue could there be in this scarf against the violence of storms? Eustathius very well answers this objection. It is evident, that the belief of the power of amulets or charms prevailed in the times of Homer; thus Moly is used by Ulysses as a preservative against fascination, and some charm may be supposed to be implied in the zone or caestus of Venus. Thus Ulysses may be imagined to have worn a scarf, or cincture, as a preservative against the perils of the sea. They consecrated antiently Votiva, as tablets, etc. in the temples of their Gods: so Ulysses, wearing a zone consecrated to Leucothea, may be said to receive it from the hands of that goddess. Eustathius observes, that Leucothea did not appear in the form of a bird, for then how should she speak, or how bring this cincture or scarf? The expression has relation only to the manner of her rising out of the sea, and descending into it; the action, not the person, is intended to be represented. Thus Minerva is said in the *Odyssey*, to fly away, ὄρνις ὡς ἀνὴρταια, not in the form, but with the swiftness of an eagle. Most of the translators have rendered this passage ridiculously, they describe her in the real form of a sea-fowl, though she speaks, and gives her scarf. So the version of Hobbes:

She spoke, in figure of a water-hen.

Struck with amaze, yet still to doubt inclin'd, 450
 He stands suspended, and explores his mind.
 What shall I do? Unhappy me! who knows
 But other Gods intend me other woes?
 Whoe'er thou art, I shall not blindly join
 Thy pleaded reason, but consult with mine: 455
 For scarce in ken appears that distant isle
 Thy voice foretells me shall conclude my toil.
 Thus then I judge; while yet the planks sustain
 The wild waves fury, here I fix'd remain:

ψ. 454. ——— *I shall not blindly join
 Thy pleaded reason. ———]*

Eustathius observes, that this passage is a lesson to instruct us, that second reflections are preferable to our first thoughts; and the poet maintains the character of Ulysses by describing him thus doubtful and cautious. But is not Ulysses too incredulous, who will not believe a goddess? and disobedient to her, by not committing himself to the seas? Leucothea does not confine Ulysses to an immediate compliance with her injunctions: she commands him to forsake the raft, but leaves the time to his own discretion: and Ulysses might very justly be somewhat incredulous, when he knew that Neptune was his enemy, and contriving his destruction. The doubts therefore of Ulysses are the doubts of a wise man: but then, is not Ulysses described with a greater degree of prudence, than the goddess? she commands him to leave the raft, he chuses to make use of it till he arrives nearer the shores. Eustathius directly ascribes more wisdom to Ulysses than to Leucothea. This may appear too partial; it is sufficient to observe, that the command of Leucothea was general, and left the manner of the execution of it to his own prudence.

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Book V. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 277

But when their texture to the tempest yields, 460
I launch advent'rous on the liquid fields,
Join to the help of Gods the strength of man,
And take this method, since the best I can.

While thus his thoughts an anxious council hold,
The raging God a wat'ry mountain roll'd ; 465
Like a black sheet the whelming billow spread,
Burst o'er the float, and thunder'd on his head.
Planks, beams, disparted fly : the scatter'd wood
Rolls diverse, and in fragments strows the flood.
So the rude Boreas, o'er the field new shorn, 470
Tosses and drives the scatter'd heaps of corn.

And now a single beam the chief bestrides ;
There, pois'd a while above the bounding tides,
His limbs dis-cumbers of the clinging vest,
And binds the sacred cincture round his breast : 475
Then prone on ocean in a moment flung,
Stretch'd wide his eager arms, and shot the seas along.
All naked now, on heaving billows laid,
Stern Neptune ey'd him, and contemptuous said :

Go, learn'd in woes, and other woes essay : 480
Go, wander helpless on the wat'ry way :
Thus, thus find out the destin'd shore, and then
(If Jove ordains it) mix with happier men.
Whate'er thy fate, the ills our wrath could raise
Shall last remember'd in thy best of days. 485

This said, his sea-green steeds divide the foam,
And reach high Ægae and the tow'ry dome.

Now, scarce withdrawn the fierce earth shaking pow'r,
 Jove's daughter Pallas watch'd the fav'ring hour,
 Back to their caves she bade the winds to fly, 490
 And hush'd the blust'ring brethren of the sky.
 The dryer blasts alone of Boreas sway,
 And bear him soft on broken waves away;
 With gentle force impelling to that shore,
 Where fate has destin'd he shall toil no more. 495
 And now two nights, and now two days were past,
 Since wide he wander'd on the wat'ry waste;
 Heav'd on the surge with intermitting breath,
 And hourly panting in the arms of death.
 The third fair morn now blaz'd upon the main; 500
 Then glassy smooth lay all the liquid plain,
 The winds were hush'd, the billows scarcely curl'd,
 And a dead silence still'd the wat'ry world.
 When list'd on a ridgy wave, he spies
 The land at distance, and with sharpen'd eyes. 505

y. 496. *And now two nights, and now two days were past.*] It may be thought incredible that any person should be able to contend so long with a violent storm, and at last survive it: it is allowed that this could scarce be done by the natural strength of Ulysses; but the poet has softened the narration, by ascribing his preservation to the cincture of Leucothea. The poet likewise very judiciously removes Neptune, that Ulysses may not appear to be preserved against the power of that God; and to reconcile it intirely to credibility, he introduces Pallas, who calms the winds and composes the waves, to make way for his preservation.

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As pious children joy with vast delight
 When a lov'd fire revives before their sight,
 (Who ling'ring long has call'd on death in vain,
 Fixt by some daemon to his bed of pain,

ψ. 506. *As pious children joy with vast delight.*] This is a very beautiful comparison, and well adapted to the occasion. We mistake the intention of it, as Eustathius observes, if we imagine that Homer intended to compare the person of Ulysses to these children: it is introduced solely to express the joy which he conceives at the sight of land: if we look upon it in any other view, the resemblance is lost; for the children suffer not themselves, but Ulysses is in the utmost distress. These images, drawn from common life, are particularly affecting; they have relation to every man, as every man may possibly be in such circumstances: other images may be more noble, and yet less pleasing; they may raise our admiration, but those engage our affections.

ψ. 509. *Fix'd by some daemon to his bed of pain.*] It was a prevailing opinion among the antients, that the Gods were the authors of all diseases incident to mankind. Hippocrates himself confesses that he had found some distempers, in which the hand of the Gods was manifest, *θεῶν τι*, as Dacier observes. In this place this assertion has a peculiar beauty, it shews that the malady was not contracted by any vice of the father, but inflicted by an evil daemon. Nothing is more evident, than that every person was supposed, by the antients, to have a good and bad daemon attending him; what the Greeks called a daemon, the Romans named a genius. I confess that this is no where directly affirmed in Homer, but, as Plutarch observes, it is plainly intimated. In the second book of the Iliad, the word is used both in a good and bad sense; when Ulysses addresses himself to the generals of the army, he says *Δαιμόνι*, in the better

Till heav'n by miracle his life restore) 510
 So joys Ulysses at the appearing shore ;
 And sees (and labours onward as he sees)
 The rising forests, and the tufted trees.
 And now, as near approaching as the sound
 Of human voice the list'ning ear may wound, 515
 Amidst the rocks he hears a hollow roar
 Of murm'ring surges breaking on the shore :
 Nor peaceful port was there, nor winding bay,
 To shield the vessel from the rowling sea,
 But cliffs, and shaggy shores, a dreadful sight ! 520
 All rough with rocks, with foamy billows white.
 Fear seiz'd his slacken'd limbs and beating heart ;
 As thus he commun'd with his soul apart.

Ah me ! when o'er a length of waters tost,
 These eyes at last behold th' unhop'd-for coast, 525

sense; and immediately afterwards he uses it to denote
 a coward,

Δαιμόνι ἀτρέμας ἦσο.

This is a strong evidence, that the notion of a good
 and bad daemon was believed in the days of Homer.

ψ. 524. *Ah me! when o'er a length of waters tost.*] Ulysses in this place calls, as it were, a council in his own breast; considers his danger, and how to free himself from it. But it may be asked, if it be probable that he should have leisure for such a consultation, in the time of such imminent danger? The answer is, that nothing could be more happily imagined, to exalt his character: he is drawn with a great presence of mind, in the most desperate circumstances: fear does not prevail over his reason: his wisdom dictates the means of

No port receives me from the angry main,
 But the loud deeps demand me back again.
 Above, sharp rocks forbid access ; around
 Roar the wild waves ; beneath, is sea profound !
 No footing sure affords the faithless sand, 530
 To stem too rapid, and too deep to stand.

If here I enter, my efforts are vain,
 Dash'd on the cliffs, or heav'd into the main ;
 Or round the island if my course I bend,
 Where the ports open, or the shores descend, 535
 Back to the seas the rolling surge may sweep,
 And bury all my hopes beneath the deep.
 Or some enormous whale the God may send,
 (For many such on Amphitrite attend)

Too well the turns of mortal chance I know, 540
 And hate relentless of my heav'nly foe.

While thus he thought, a monstrous wave up-bore
 The chief, and dash'd him on the craggy shore :
 Torn was his skin, nor had the ribs been whole,
 But instant Pallas enter'd in his soul. 545
 Close to the cliff with both his hands he clung,
 And stuck adherent, and suspended hung :

his preservation : and his bravery of spirit supports him
 in the accomplishment of it.

The poet is also very judicious in the management
 of the speech : it is concise, and therefore proper to
 the occasion, there being no leisure for prolixity ; every
 image is drawn from the situation of the place, and
 his present condition ; he follows nature, and nature is
 the foundation of true poetry.

Till the huge surge roll'd off. Then backward sweep

The reflux tides, and plunge him in the deep.

As when the Polypus from forth his cave 550

Torn with full force, reluctant beats the wave,

ψ. 550. *As when the Polypus.*] It is very surprizing to see the prodigious variety with which Homer enlivens his poetry: he rises or falls as his subject leads him, and finds allusions proper to represent an hero in battle, or a person in calamity. We have here an instance of it; he compares Ulysses to a Polypus; the similitude is suited to the element, and to the condition of the person. It is observable, that this is the only full description of a person shipwrecked in all his poems; he therefore gives a loose to his imagination, and enlarges upon it very copiously. There appears a surprizing fertility of invention through the whole of it: in what a variety of attitudes is Ulysses drawn, during the storm, and at his escape from it? his soliloquies in the turns of his condition, while he is sometimes almost out of danger, and then again involved in new difficulties, engage our hopes and fears. He ennobles the whole by his machinery, and Neptune, Pallas, and Leucothea interest themselves in his safety or destruction. He has likewise chosen the most proper occasion for a copious description; there is leisure for it. The proposition of the poem requires him to describe a man of sufferings in the person of Ulysses: he therefore no sooner introduces him, but he throws him into the utmost calamities, and describes them largely, to shew, at once, the greatness of his distress, and his wisdom and patience under it. In what are the sufferings of Æneas in Virgil comparable to these of Ulysses? Æneas suffers little personally in comparison of Ulysses, his incidents have less variety, and consequently less beauty. Homer draws his images from nature, but embellishes those images with the utmost art, and fruitfulness of invention.

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His ragged claws are stuck with stones and sands;
 So the rough rock had shagg'd Ulysses' hands.
 And now had perish'd, whelm'd beneath the main,
 Th' unhappy man; ev'n fate had been in vain: 555
 But all-subduing Pallas lent her pow'r,
 And prudence fav'd him in the needful hour,
 Beyond the beating surge his course he bore,
 (A wider circle, but in sight of shore)
 With longing eyes, observing, to survey 560
 Some smooth ascent, or safe-sequester'd bay.
 Between the parting rocks at length he spy'd
 A falling stream with gentler waters glide;
 Where to the seas the shelving shore declin'd,
 And form'd a bay, impervious to the wind. 565
 To this calm port the glad Ulysses prest,
 And hail'd the river, and its God address.

Whoe'er thou art, before whose stream unknown
 I bend, a suppliant at thy wat'ry throne,
 Hear, azure king! nor let me fly in vain 570
 To thee from Neptune and the raging main.
 Heav'n hears and pities helpless men like me,
 For sacred ev'n to Gods is misery:

Y. 573. *For sacred ev'n to gods is misery.*] This expression is bold, yet reconcileable to truth: heaven, in reality, has regard to the misery and affliction of good men, and at last delivers them from it. *Res est sacra miser*, as Dacier observes; and Seneca, in his dissertation on Providence, speaks to this purpose, *Ecce spectaculum dignum ad quod respiciat, intentus operi suo, Deus! Ecce par Deo dignum, vir fortis cum mala fortuna*

Let then thy waters give the weary rest,
And save a suppliant, and a man distressed. 575

He pray'd, and strait the gentle stream subsides,
Detains the rushing current of his tides,
Before the wand'rer smooths the wat'ry way,
And soft receives him from the rowling sea.
That moment, fainting as he touch'd the shore, 580
He dropt his sinewy arms : his knees no more
Perform'd their office, or his weight upheld :
His swoln heart heav'd ; his bloated body swell'd :

compositus! Misery is not always a punishment, but sometimes a trial : this is agreeable to true theology.

ψ. 578. *Before the wand'rer smooths the wat'ry way.*] Such passages as these are bold, yet beautiful. Poetry animates every thing, and turns rivers into Gods. But what occasion is there for the intervention of this River-God to smooth the waters, when Pallas had already composed both the seas and the storms? The words in the original solve the objection, *πρόσθε δὲ οἱ ποιεῖτε γαλήνην*; or *smooth'd the way before him*, that is, his own current : the actions therefore are different ; Pallas gives a general calmness to the sea, the River-God to his own current.

ψ. 581. *He dropp'd his sinewy arms : his knees no more Perform'd their office.*]

Eustathius appears to me to give this passage a very forced interpretation ; he imagines that the poet, by saying that Ulysses bent his knees and arms, spoke philosophically, and intended to express that he contracted his limbs, that had been fatigued with the long extension in swimming, by a voluntary remission ; lest they should grow stiff, and lose their natural faculty. But this is an impossibility : how could this be done, when he is speechless, fainting, without pulse and respiration? Un-

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From mouth and nose the briny torrent ran ;

And lost in lassitude lay all the man, 585

Depriv'd of voice, of motion, and of breath ;

The soul scarce waking, in the arms of death.

Soon as warm life its wonted office found,

The mindful chief Leucothea's scarf unbound ;

Observant of her word, he turn'd aside 590

His head, and cast it on the rolling tide.

Behind him far, upon the purple waves

The waters waft it, and the nymph receives.

Now parting from the stream, Ulysses found

A mossy bank with pliant rushes crown'd ;

The bank he press'd, and gently kiss'd the ground ;

Where on the flow'ry herb as soft he lay,

Thus to his soul the sage began to say.

What will ye next ordain, ye Pow'rs on high !

And yet, ah yet ! what fates are we to try ? 600

Here by the stream, if I the night out-wear,

Thus spent already, how shall nature bear

The dews descending, and nocturnal air ?

Or chilly vapours breathing from the flood

When morning rises ? If I take the wood, 605

And in thick shelter of innum'rous boughs

Enjoy the comfort gentle sleep allows ;

doubtedly Homer, as Dacier observes, means by the expression of *ἔκαμψεν γόνατα καὶ χεῖρας*, no more than that his limbs failed him, or he fainted. If the action was voluntary, it implies, that he intended to refresh them, for *γόνυ κάμπτειν* is generally used in that sense by Homer ; if involuntary, it signifies he fainted.

Though fenc'd from cold, and though my toil be past,
 What savage beasts may wander in the waste?
 Perhaps I yet may fall a bloody prey 610
 To prowling bears, or lions in their way.

Thus long debating in himself he stood:
 At length he took the passage to the wood,
 Whose shady horrors on a rising brow
 Wav'd high, and frown'd upon the stream below. 615
 There grew two olives, closest of the grove,
 With roots intwin'd, and branches interwove;
 Alike their leaves, but not alike they smil'd
 With sister-fruits; one fertile, one was wild.
 Nor here the sun's meridian rays had pow'r, 620
 Nor wind sharp-piercing, nor the rushing show'r;
 The verdant arch so close its texture kept:
 Beneath this covert, great Ulysses crept.
 Of gather'd leaves an ample bed he made,
 (Thick strown by tempest through the bow'ry shade)
 Where three at least might winter's cold defy, 626
 Though Boreas rag'd along th' inclement sky.
 This store, with joy the patient hero found,
 And sunk amidst them, heap'd the leaves around.
 As some poor peasant, fated to reside 630
 Remote from neighbours in a forest wide,

*y. 630. As some poor peasant, fated to reside
 Remote from neighbours.]*

Homer is very happy in giving dignity to low images.
 What can be more unpromising than this comparison,
 and what more successfully executed? Ulysses, in whom

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Studious to save what human wants require,
 In embers heap'd, preserves the seeds of fire :
 Hid in dry foliage thus Ulysses lies,
 Till Pallas pour'd soft slumbers on his eyes ; 635
 And golden dreams (the gift of sweet repose)
 Lull'd all his cares, and banish'd all his woes.

remains, as it were, but a spark of life, the vital heat being extinguished by the shipwreck, is very justly compared to a brand, that retains only some small remains of fire ; the leaves that cover Ulysses, are represented by the embers, and the preservation of the fire all night, paints the revival of his spirits by the repose of the night ; the expression,

——— *Fated to reside*
Remote from neighbours,

is not added in vain ; it gives, as Eustathius further observes, an air of credibility to the allusion, as if it had really been drawn from some particular observation ; a person that lives in a desert being obliged to such circumstantial cares, where it is impossible to have a supply, for want of neighbours. Homer literally calls these remains *the seeds of fire* ; Æschylus in his Prometheus calls a spark of fire *αὐτὸς ἀγνὴν*, or *a fountain of fire* ; less happily in my judgment, the ideas of fire and water being contradictory.

The conclusion.] This book begins with the seventh day, and comprehends the space of twenty-five days ; the first of which is taken up in the message of Mercury, and interview between Calypso and Ulysses ; the four following in the building of the vessel ; eighteen before the storm, and two after it. So that one and thirty days are completed, since the opening of the poem.

THE HISTORY OF THE
LIFE OF
JOHN DE Witt
BY
JOHN DE Witt

JOHN DE WITT was born at Rotterdam in the year 1659. He was educated at the University of Leiden, and afterwards at the University of Utrecht. He was a member of the Academy of Sciences at Amsterdam, and of the Academy of Sciences at Leiden. He was a member of the Academy of Sciences at Utrecht, and of the Academy of Sciences at Groningen. He was a member of the Academy of Sciences at Leyden, and of the Academy of Sciences at Dordrecht. He was a member of the Academy of Sciences at Rotterdam, and of the Academy of Sciences at The Hague.

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T H E A R G U M E N T.

Pallas appearing in a dream to Nausicaa, (the daughter of Alcinous king of Phaeacia) commands her to descend to the river, and wash the robes of state, in preparation to her nuptials. Nausicaa goes with her handmaids to the river; where, while the garments are spread on the bank, they divert themselves in sports. Their voices awake Ulysses, who, addressing himself to the princess, is by her relieved and clothed, and receives directions in what manner to apply to the king and queen of the island.

WHILE thus the weary wand'rer sunk to rest,
And peaceful slumbers calm'd his anxious breast;
The martial maid from heav'n's aerial height
Swift to Phaeacia wing'd her rapid flight.
In elder times the soft Phaeacian train 5
In ease possess'd the wide Hyperian plain;
Till the Cyclopean race in arms arose,
A lawless nation of gygantic foes:
Then great Nautilhus from Hyperia
Through seas retreat'ing from the squad of war, 10

The recreant nation to fair Scheria led,
Where never science rear'd her laurel'd head :

ψ. 12. *Where never science rear'd her laurel'd head.*] The Phaeacians having a great share in the succeeding parts of the Odyssey, it may not be improper to enlarge upon their character. Homer has here described them very distinctly: he is to make use of the Phaeacians to convey Ulysses to his country; he therefore, by this short character, gives the reader such an image of them, that he is not surpriz'd at their credulity and simplicity, in believing all those fabulous recitals which Ulysses makes in the progress of the poem. The place likewise in which he describes them is well chosen: it is before they enter upon action, and by this method we know what to expect from them, and see how every action is naturally suited to their character.

Bossu observes that the poet has inserted this verse with great judgment: Ulysses, says he, knew that the Phaeacians were simple and credulous; and that they had all the qualities of a lazy people, who admire nothing so much as romantic adventures: he therefore pleases them by recitals suited to their own humour: but even here the poet is not unmindful of his more understanding readers, and the truth intended to be taught by way of moral is, that a soft and effeminate life breaks the spirit, and renders it incapable of manly sentiments or actions.

Plutarch seems to understand this verse in a different manner; he quotes it in his dissertation upon banishment, to shew that Nausithous made his people happy, though he left his own country, and settled them far from the commerce of mankind, *ἐκὰς ἀνδρῶν ἀλιτρώων*, without any particular view to the Phaeacians, which was undoubtedly intended by Homer; those words being a kind of a preface to their general character.

This Phaeacia of the antients is the island now call-

There round his tribes a strength of wall he rais'd,
 To heav'n the glitt'ring domes and temples blaz'd;
 Just to his realms, he parted grounds from grounds, 15
 And shar'd the lands, and gave the lands their bounds.
 Now in the silent grave the monarch lay,
 And wife Alcinous held the regal sway.

To his high palace through the fields of air
 The goddesses shot; * Ulysses was her care. 20
 There as the night in silence roll'd away,
 A heav'n of charms divine Nausicaa lay:
 Through the thick gloom the shining portals blaze;
 Two nymphs the portals guard, each nymph a Grace.

ed Corfu. The inhabitants of it were a colony of the Hyperians: Eustathius remarks, that it has been a question whether Hyperia were a city or an island; he judges it to be a city: it was infested by the Cyclops; but they had no shipping, as appears from the tenth of the Odyssey, and consequently if it had been an island, they could not have molested the Phaeacians; he therefore concludes it to be a city, afterwards called Camarina in Sicily.

Mr. Barnes has here added a verse that is not to be found in any other edition; and I have rendered it in the translation.

ψ. 24. *Two nymphs the portals guard, each nymph a Grace.*] The poet, as Eustathius observes, celebrates the beauty of these two attending virgins to raise their characters, that they may not be esteemed common servants, or the poet thought extravagant when he compares Nausicaa and her damsels to Diana and her nymphs.

The judgment with which he introduces the vision is remarkable: in the Iliad, when he is to give an air

Light as the viewless air, the warrior maid 25
 Glides through the valves, and hovers round her head ;
 A fav'rite virgin's blooming form she took,
 From Dymas sprung, and thus the vision spoke :

Oh indolent ! to waste thy hours away !
 And sleep'st thou, careless of the bridal day ? 30
 Thy spousal ornament neglected lies ;
 Arise, prepare the bridal train, arise.

of importance to his vision, he clothes it in the likeness of Nestor, the wisest person of the army ; a man of less consideration had been unsuitable to the greatness of the occasion, which was to persuade kings and heroes. Here the poet sends a vision to a young lady, under the resemblance of a young lady : he adapts the circumstances to the person, and describes the whole with an agreeable propriety. Eustathius.

ψ. 31. *The spousal ornament neglected lies :
 Arise, prepare the bridal train.]*

Here is a remarkable custom of antiquity. Eustathius observes, that it was usual for the bride to give changes of dress to the friends of the bridegroom at the celebration of the marriage, and Homer directly affirms it. Dacier quotes a passage in Judges concerning Sampson's giving changes of garments at his marriage feast, as an instance of the like custom among the Israelites ; but I believe, if there was such a custom at all amongst them, it is not evident from the passage alleged : nothing is plainer, than that Sampson had not given the garments, if his riddle had not been expounded : nay, instead of giving, he himself had received them, if it had not been interpreted. I am rather of opinion that what is said of Sampson, has relation to another custom amongst the ancients, of proposing an ænigma at festivals, and adjudging a reward to him that solved it. These the

A just applause the cares of dress impart,
And give soft transport to a parent's heart.

Greeks called γρίφος συμποτικὸς; *griphos convivales*; Athenaeus has a long dissertation about this practice in his tenth book, and gives a number of instances of the enigmatical propositions in use at Athens, and of the forfeitures and rewards upon the solution, and non-solution of them; and Eustathius, in the tenth book of the *Odyssey*, comes into the same opinion. So that if it was a custom amongst the Israelites, as well as Greeks, to give garments, (as it appears to be to give other gifts) this passage is no instance of it: it is indeed a proof that the Hebrews, as well as Greeks, had a custom of entertaining themselves at their festivals, with these *griphi convivales*: I therefore believe that these changes of garments were to more than rewards or forfeits, according to the success in the interpretation.

ψ. 33. *A just applause the cares of dress impart.*] It is very probable that Quintilian had this verse in his view when he wrote *Cultus magnificus addit hominibus, ut Graeco versu testatum est, auctoritatem*. His words are almost a translation of it.

* Ἐκ γὰρ τοι τῶν πάντων ἀνθρώπων ἀναβαίνει,
Ἐσθλῆ.

What I would chiefly observe is the propriety with which this commendation of dress is introduced; it is put into the mouth of a young lady (for so Pallas appears to be) to whose character it is suitable to delight in ornament. It likewise agrees very well with the description of the Phaeacians, whose chief happiness consisted in dancing, dressing, singing, *etc.* Such a commendation of ornament would have been improper in the mouth of a philosopher, but beautiful when spoken by a young lady to Alcinous.

Haste, to the limpid stream direct thy way, 35

When the gay morn unveils her smiling ray :

Haste to the stream ! companion of thy care

Lo I thy steps attend, thy labours share.

Virgin, awake ! the marriage hour is nigh, 39

See ! from their thrones thy kindred monarchs sigh !

ψ. 35. *Haste, to the limpid stream.*] This passage has not escaped the raillery of the critics ; Homer, say they, brings the goddess of wisdom down from heaven, only to advise Nausicaa to make haste to wash her cloths against her wedding : what necessity is there for a conduct so extraordinary upon so trivial an occasion ? Eustathius sufficiently answers the objection, by observing that the poet very naturally brings about the safety of Ulysses by it; the action of the washing is the means, the protection of Ulysses the end of the descent of that goddess ; so that she is not introduced lightly, or without contributing to an important action : and it must be allowed, that the means made use of are very natural ; they grow out of the occasion, and at once give the fable a poetical turn, and an air of probability.

It has been further objected, that the poet gives an unworthy employment to Nausicaa, the daughter of a king ; but such critics form their idea of antient, from modern greatness : it would be now a meanness to describe a person of quality thus employed, because custom has made it the work of persons of low condition : it would be now thought dishonourable for a lady of high station to attend the flocks ; yet we find, in the most antient history extant, that the daughters of Laban and Jethro, persons of power and distinction, were so-employed, without any dishonour to their quality. In short, these passages are to be looked upon as exact pictures of the old world, and consequently as valuable remains of antiquity.

The royal car at early dawn obtain,
 And order mules obedient to the rein;
 For rough the way, and distant rolls the wave
 Where their fair vests Phaeacian virgins lave.
 In pomp ride forth; for pomp becomes the great, 45
 And majesty derives a grace from state.

Then to the palaces of heav'n she sails,
 Incumbent on the wings of wafting gales:

ψ. 41. *The royal car obtain.*] It would have been an impropriety to have rendered ἄμαξαν by the word *chariot*; Homer seems industriously to avoid ἄρμα, but constantly uses ἀπὴν, or ἄμαξα; this car was drawn by mules; whereas, observes Eustathius, the chariot or ἄρμα was proper only for horses. The word *car* takes in the idea of any other vehicle, as well as of a chariot.

This passage has undergone a very severe censure, as mean and ridiculous, chiefly from the expressions to her father afterwards, ὤψηλόν, εὐκυκλον: which being rendered *high, and round*, disgrace the author: no person, I believe, would ask a father to lend his high and round car; nor has Homer said it: Eustathius observes, that εὐκυκλος is the same as εὐτροχος κύκλα λέγονται οἱ τροχοί, or wheels; and that ὑπερτερία, is τὸ ἐπικείμενον τετραγώνον πλινθίων τῷ ἄξονι, or the quadrangular body of the car that rests upon the axle of it; this fully answers the criticism: Nausicaa describes the car so particularly, to distinguish it from a chariot, which had been improper for her purpose: the other part of the objection, concerning the roundness of the car, is a mistake in the critic; the word having relation to the wheels, and not to the body of it, which, as Eustathius observes, was quadrangular.

ψ. 47. *Then to the palaces of heav'n she sails.*] Lu-

The feat of Gods, the regions mild of peace,
Full joy, and calm eternity of ease. 50

There no rude winds presume to shake the skies,
No rains descend, no snowy vapours rise;
But on immortal thrones the blest repose:
The firmament with living splendors glows.
Hither the goddess wing'd th' aerial way, 55
Through heav'n's eternal gates that blaz'd with day.

Now from her rosy car Aurora shod
The dawn, and all the orient flam'd with red.
Up rose the virgin with the morning light,
Obedient to the vision of the night.
The queen she sought: the queen her hours bestow'd
In curious works; the whirling spindle glow'd

cretius has copied this fine passage, and equalled, if not surpassed the original.

*Apparet Divum numen, sedesque quietae,
Quas neque concutiunt venti, neque nubila nimbis
Aspergunt, neque nix acri concreta pruina
Cana cadens violat: semperque innubilis aether
Integit, et large diffuso lumine ridet.*

The picture is the same in both authors, but the colouring, in my opinion, is less beautiful in Homer than Lucretius: the three last lines in particular are fuller of ornament, and the very verses have an air of the serenity they were intended to paint.

y. 61. ——— The queen her hours bestow'd
In various works. ———]

This is another image of antient life: we see a queen amidst her attendants at work at the dawn of day:
de nocte surrexit, et digiti ejus apprehenderant fusum.

Book VI. HOMER's ODYSSEY. 297

With crimson threads, while busy damsels cull
The snowy fleece, or twist the purpled wool.

Mean-while Phaeacia's peers in council fate; 65

From his high dome the king descends^d in state,

Then with a filial awe the royal maid

Approach'd him passing, and submissive said;

Will my dread fire his ear regardful deign,

And may his child the royal car obtain? 70

Say, with thy garments shall I bend my way

Where through the vales the mazy waters stray?

A dignity of dress adorns the great,

And kings draw lustre from the robe of state.

Five sons thou hast; three wait the bridal day, 75

And spotless robes become the young and gay:

So when with praise amid the dance they shine,

By these my cares adorn'd, that praise is mine.

Thus she: but blushes ill restrain'd betray

Her thoughts intente on the bridal day: 80

The conscious fire the dawning blush survey'd,

And smiling thus bespoke the blooming maid.

My child, my darling joy, the car receive;

That, and whate'er our daughter asks, we give.

Swift at the royal nod th' attending train 85

The car prepare, the mules incessant rein.

This is a practice as contrary to the manners of our ages, as the other of washing the robes: it is the more remarkable in this queen, because she lived amongst an idle effeminate people, that loved nothing but pleasures. Dacier.

The blooming virgin, with dispatchful cares,
 Tunics, and stoles, and robes imperial bears.
 The queen, assiduous, to her train assigns
 The sumptuous viands, and the flav'rous wines. 90
 The train prepare a cruise of curious mold,
 A cruise of fragrance, form'd of burnish'd gold;
 Odour divine! whose soft refreshing streams
 Sleek the smooth skin, and scent the snowy limbs.
 Now mounting the gay seat, the filken reins 95
 Shine in her hand: along the sounding plains

γ. 88. *Tunics, and stoles, and robes imperial bears.*]

It is not without reason that the poet describes Nausicaa carrying the whole wardrobe of the family to the river: he inserts these circumstances so particularly, that she may be able to clothe Ulysses in the sequel of the story: he further observes the modesty and simplicity of those early times, when the whole dress of a king and his family (who reigned over a people that delighted in dress) is without gold: for we see Nausicaa carries with her all the habits that were used at the greatest solemnities; which had they been wrought with gold could not have been washed. Eustathius.

γ 95. *Now mounting the gay seat, etc.*] This image of Nausicaa riding in her car to the river, has exercised the pencils of excellent painters. Pausanias in his fifth book, which is the first of the Eliacs, speaks of a picture of two virgins drawn by mules, of which the one guides the reins, the other has her head covered with a veil: it is believed that it represents Nausicaa, the daughter of Alcinous, going with one of her virgins to the river. The words of Pausanias have caused some doubt with relation to the picture; he says, ἐπὶ ἡμιόνων, or upon mules, but Homer describes her upon a car; how then can Nausicaa be intended by the painter?

Book V

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Swift fly the mules: nor rode the nymph alone,
Around, a beavy of bright damsels shone.

They seek the cisterns where Phacacian dames
Wash their fair garments in the limpid streams; 100
Where gathering into depth from falling rills,
The lucid wave a spacious bason fills.

But Romulus Amasæus, who comments upon Pausanias, solves the difficulty, by observing that ἐπὶ ἡμιόνων does not signify upon mules, but a car drawn by mules, by a figure frequent in all authors. Pliny is also thus to be understood in his 35th book; Protogenes, the Rhodian, painted at Athens, Paralus, and likewise Hemionida, who is said to represent Nauficæa; Hemionida is used (as Hermolaus Barbarus observes upon that passage) as a term of art to express a virgin riding upon, or more properly drawn by mules, or ἐπὶ ἡμιόνων. Spondanus.

§. 101. *Where gathering into depth from falling rills,
The lucid wave a spacious bason fills.*]

It is evident, that the antients had basons, or cisterns, continually supplied by the rivers for this business of washing; they were called, observes Eustathius, πλυνοὶ or βόθροι; and were sometimes made of marble, other times of wood. Thus in the Iliad, book 22d,

*Each gushing fount a marble cistern fills,
Whose polish'd bed receives the falling rills,
Where Trojan dames, ere yet alarm'd by Greece,
Wash'd their fair garments in the days of peace.*

The manner of washing was different from what is now in use: they trod them with their feet, Στῆθον, ἑτρίβον τοῖς ποσὶ. Eustathius.

It may be thought that these customs are of small importance, and of little concern to the present ages: it is true; but time has stamped a value upon them: like antient medals, their intrinsic worth may be small, but yet they are valuable, because images of antiquity.

The mules unharnes'd range beside the main,
Or crop the verdant herbage of the plain.

Then æmulous the royal robes they lave, 105
And plunge the vestures in the cleansing wave :
(The vestures cleans'd o'erspread the shelly sand,
Their snowy lustre whitens all the strand :)
Then with a short repast relieve their toil,
And o'er their limbs diffuse ambrosial oil : 110
And while the robes imbibe the solar ray,
O'er the green mead the sporting virgins play :
(Their shining veils unbound.) Along the skies
Toft, and retoft, the ball incessant flies.

Plutarch, in his *Symposiasts*, proposes this question, Why Nausicaa washes in the river, rather than the sea, though it was more nigh, more hot, and consequently more fit for the purpose than the river? Theon answers from Aristotle, that the sea-water has many gross, rough, and earthy particles in it, as appears from its saltness, whereas fresh water is more pure and unmixt, and consequently more subtle and penetrating, and fitter for use in washing. Themistocles dislikes this reason, and affirms the sea-water, being more rough and earthy than that of rivers, is therefore the most proper, for its cleansing quality; this appears from observation; for in washing, ashes, or some such substance, are thrown into the fresh water to make it effectual, for those particles open the pores, and conduce to the effect of cleansing. The true reason then is, that there is an unctuous nature in sea-water, (and Aristotle confesses all salt to be unctuous) which hinders it from cleansing: whereas river-water is pure, less mixt, and consequently more subtle and penetrating, and being free from all oily substance, is preferable and more effectual than sea-water.

They sport, they feast; Nausicaa lifts her voice, 115
And warbling sweet, makes earth and heav'n rejoice.

As when o'er Erymanth Diana roves,
Or wide Taygetus's resounding groves;

ψ. 117. *As when o'er Erymanth Diana roves.*] This is a very beautiful comparison, (and whenever I say any thing in commendation of Homer, I would always be understood to mean the original.) Virgil was sensible of it, and inserted it in his poem.

*Qualis in Eurôtæ ripis, aut per juga Cynthi
Exercet Diana choros; quam mille secutæ
Hinc atque hinc glomerantur Oreades: illa pharetram
Fert humero, gradiensque deas supereminet omnes:
Latonæ tacitum pertentant gaudia pectus.*

It has given occasion for various criticisms, with relation to the beauty of the two authors. I will lay before the reader what is said in behalf of Homer in Aulus Gellius, and the answer by Scaliger.

Gellius writes, that it was the opinion of Valerius Probus, that no passage has been more unhappily copied by Virgil, than this comparison. Homer very beautifully compares Nausicaa, a virgin, sporting with her damsels in a solitary place, to Diana, a virgin goddess, taking her diversion in a forest, in hunting with her rural nymphs. Whereas Dido, a widow, is drawn by Virgil in the midst of a city, walking gravely with the Tyrian princes, *instans operi, regnisque futuris*, a circumstance that bears not the least resemblance to the sports of the goddess. Homer represents Diana with her quiver at her shoulder, but, at the same time, he describes her as an huntress: Virgil gives her a quiver, but mentions nothing of her as an huntress, and consequently lays a needless burden upon her shoulder. Homer excellently paints the fulness of joy which Latona felt at the sight of her daughter, *γίγνθς δὲ τὴν ἑρπύκην Ἀντιόχην*:

A Sylvan train the huntress queen surrounds,
 Her rattling quiver from her shoulder sounds: 120
 Fierce in the sport, along the mountain brow
 They bay the boar, or chase the bounding roe;
 High o'er the lawn, with more majestic pace,
 Above the nymphs she treads with stately grace;
 Distinguish'd excellence the goddess proves; 125
 Exults Latona as the virgin moves.

Virgil falls infinitely short of it in the word *pertentant*, which signifies a light joy that sinks not deep into the heart. Lastly, Virgil has omitted the strongest point and very flower of the comparison,

ῥεῖα δ' ἀριγνώτη πείλειαι, καλαὶ δὲ τὲ πάσαι,

It is the last circumstance that completes the comparison, as it distinguishes Nausicaa from her attendants, for which very purpose the allusion was introduced.

Scaliger, who never deserts Virgil in any difficulty, answers, that the persons, not the places, are intended to be represented by both poets; otherwise Homer himself is blameable, for Nausicaa is not sporting on a mountain but a plain, and has neither bow nor quiver like Diana. Neither is there any weight in the objection concerning the gravity of the gait of Dido; for neither is Nausicaa described in the act of hunting, but dancing: and as for the word *pertentant*, it is a metaphor taken from musicians and musical instruments: it denotes a strong degree of joy, *per* bears an intensive sense, and takes in the perfection of joy. As to the quiver, it was an ensign of the goddess, as Ἀργυρότοξος was of Apollo, and is applied to her upon all occasions indifferently, not only by Virgil, but more frequently by Homer. Lastly, ῥεῖα δ' ἀριγνώτη, etc. is superfluous, for the joy of Latona completes the whole, and Homer has already said, γέγηθε δὲ τὲ φρένα Λητώ.

When equal grace Nauficæa trod the plain,
And shone transcendent o'er the beauteous train.

Mean time (the care and fav'rite of the skies)
Wrapt in embow'ring shade Ulysses lies, 130
His woes forgot ! But Pallas now addrest
To break the bands of all-composing rest.
Forth from her snowy hand Nauficæa threw
The various ball ; the ball erroneous flew,

But still it must be allowed, that there is a greater correspondence to the subject intended to be illustrated, in Homer than in Virgil. Diana sports, so does Nauficæa ; Diana is a virgin, so is Nauficæa ; Diana is amongst her virgin nymphs, Nauficæa among her virgin attendants ; whereas in all these points there is the greatest dissimilitude between Dido and Diana : and no one I believe but Scaliger can think the verse above quoted superfluous, which indeed is the beauty and perfection of the comparison. There may, perhaps, be a more rational objection made against this line in both poets.

Latonæ tacitum pertentant gaudia pectus.

This verse has no relation to the principal subject, the expectation is fully satisfied without it, and it alludes to nothing that either precedes or follows it, and consequently may be judged superfluous.

Y. 133. *Forth from her snowy hand Nauficæa threw
The various ball.* —]

This play with the ball was called *πεῖνις*, and *ἰπειρίδα*, by the ancients ; and from the signification of the word, which is *deception*, we may learn the nature of the play : the ball was thrown to some one of the players unexpectedly, and he as unexpectedly threw it to some other of the company to catch, from which surprize upon one another, it took the name of *πεῖνις*. It was a

And swam the stream : Loud shrieks the virgin train,
And the loud shriek redoubles from the main. 136

sport much in use amongst the ancients, both men and women ; it caused a variety of motions in throwing and running, and was therefore a very healthful exercise. The Lacedaemonians were remarkable for the use of it ; Alexander the great frequently exercised at it ; and Sophocles wrote a play, called Πλυνίρις, or *Lotrices* ; in which he represented Nausicaa sporting with her damsels at this play : it is not now extant.

Dionysidorus gives us a various reading, instead of σφαίραν ἐπιτ' ἔρριψι, he writes it, πάλαν ἐπιτ', which the Latins render *πῆλον* ; and Suidas countenances the alteration ; for he writes that a damsel, named Larissa, as she sported at this play, (πῆλον, not σφαίρην) was drowned in the river Peneus. Eustathius.

What I would further observe is, the art of the poet in carrying on the story : he proceeds from incident to incident very naturally, and makes the sports of these virgins contribute to the principal design of the poem, and promote the re-establishment of Ulysses, by discovering him advantageously to the Phaeacians. He so judiciously interweaves these sports into the texture of the story, that there would be a chasm if they were taken away ; and the sports of the virgins are as much of a piece with the whole, as any of the labours of Ulysses.

The poet reaps a further advantage from this conduct : it beautifies and enlivens the poem with a pleasant and entertaining scene, and relieves the reader's mind by taking it off from a continual representation of horror and sufferings in the story of Ulysses : he himself seems here to take breath, and indulging his fancy, lets it run out into several beautiful comparisons, to prepare the reader to hear, with a better relish, the long detail of the calamities of his hero, through the sequel of the Odyssey.

Wak'd by the shrilling sound, Ulysses rose,
And to the deaf woods wailing, breath'd his woes.

Ah me! on what inhospitable coast,
On what new region is Ulysses tost? 140
Possess'd by wild barbarians fierce in arms,
Or men, whose bosom tender pity warms?
What sounds are these that gather from the shores?
The voice of nymphs that haunt the sylvan bow'rs?
The fair-hair'd Dryads of the shady wood, 145
Or azure daughters of the silver flood?

v. 139. *Ah me! on what inhospitable coast.*] This soliloquy is well adapted to the circumstances of Ulysses, and short, as is requisite in all soliloquies.

Virgil has imitated it, and Scaliger in general prefers the copy to the original.

*Ut primum lux alma data est, exire, locosque
Explorare novos, quas vento accesserit oras:
Qui teneant (nam inculta videt) hominesque, feraeque,
Quaerere constituit* —

But it may perhaps be true, that Virgil here falls short of Homer: there is not that harmony of numbers, that variety of circumstances, and sentiments in the Latin, as appears in the Greek poet; and above all, the whole passage has more force and energy by being put into the mouth of Ulysses, than when merely related by Virgil.

Dacier observes, that Abraham makes the very same reflections as Ulysses, upon his arrival at Gerar. *Cogitavi mecum dicens, forsitan non est timor Domini in loco isto.* Gen. xx. 11. *I thought; surely the fear of God is not in this place;* which very well answers to *καὶ ἀκούσας ἐπὶ δαυδῆς.*

Or human voice? but issuing from the shades
Why cease I strait to learn what sound invades?

Then, where the grove with leaves umbrageous bends,
With forceful strength a branch the hero rends; 150
Around his loins the verdant cincture spreads
A wreathy foliage, and concealing shades.

ψ. 151. *Around his loins the verdant cincture spreads
A wreathy foliage and concealing shades.*]

This passage has given great offence to the critics. The interview between Ulysses and Nausicaa, says Rapin, outrages all the rules of decency: she forgets her modesty, and betrays her virtue, by giving too long an audience: she yields too much to his complaints, and indulges her curiosity too far at the sight of a person in such circumstances. But perhaps Rapin is too severe; Homer has guarded every circumstance with as much caution as if he had been aware of the objection: he covers his loins with a broad foliage, for Eustathius observes, that *πλεῖθος* signifies *κλάδος πλατύς*, or a broad branch; he makes Ulysses speak at a proper distance, and introduces Minerva to encourage her virgin modesty. Is there here any outrage of decency? Besides, what takes off this objection of immodesty in Nausicaa, is, that the sight of a naked man was not unusual in those ages; it was customary for virgins of the highest quality to attend heroes to the bath, and even to assist in bathing them, without any breach of modesty; as is evident from the conduct of Polycaeste in the conclusion of the third book of the *Odyssey*, who bathes and perfumes Telemachus. If this be true, the other objections of Rapin about her yielding too much to his complaints, etc. are of no weight; but so many testimonies of her virtuous and compassionate disposition, which induces her to pity and relieve calamity. Yet it may seem that the other damsels had a different opinion of

As when a lion in the midnight hours
Beat by rude blasts, and wet with wat'ry show'rs,

this interview, and that through modesty they ran away, while Nausicaa alone talks with Ulysses: but this only shews, not that she had less modesty, but more prudence, than her retinue. The damsels fled not out of modesty, but fear of an enemy: whereas Nausicaa wisely reflects that no such person could arrive there, the country being an island; and from his appearance, she rightly concluded him to be a man in calamity. This Wisdom is the Pallas in the allegory, which makes her to stay when the other damsels fly for want of equal reflection. Adam and Eve covered themselves after the same manner as Ulysses.

ψ. 153. *As when a lion in the midnight hours.*] This is a very noble comparison, yet has not escaped censure: it has been objected, that it is improper for the occasion, as bearing images of too much terror, only to fright a few timorous virgins, and that the poet is unseasonably sublime. This is only true in burlesque poetry, where the most noble images are frequently assembled to disgrace the subject, and to shew a ridiculous disproportion between the allusion and the principal subject; but the same reason will not hold in epic poetry, where the poet raises a low circumstance into dignity by a sublime comparison. The simile is not introduced merely to shew the impression it made upon the virgins, but paints Ulysses himself in very strong colours: Ulysses is fatigued with the tempests and waves; the lion with winds and storms; it is hunger that drives the lion upon his prey; an equal necessity compells Ulysses to go down to the virgins: the lion is described in all his terrors, Ulysses arms himself as going upon an unknown adventure; so that the comparison is very noble and very proper. This verse in particular has something horrible in the very run of it.

Descends terrific from the mountain's brow, 155
 With living flames his rowling eye-balls glow ;
 With conscious strength elate, he bends his way
 Majestically fierce, to seize his prey ;
 (The steer or stag :) or with keen hunger bold
 Springs o'er the fence, and dissipates the fold. 160
 No less a terror, from the neighbouring groves
 Rough from the tossing surge Ulysses moves ;
 Urg'd on by want, and recent from the storms ;
 The brackish ooze his manly grace deforms.
 Wide o'er the shore with many a piercing cry 165
 To rocks, to caves, the frightened virgins fly :
 All but the nymph : the nymph stood fix'd alone,
 By Pallas arm'd with boldness not her own.
 Mean-time in dubious thought the king awaits,
 And self-considering, as he stands, debates ; 170

Σμερδαλιος δ' αὐτῇσι πάνη κεκακωμένος ἄλμυ.

Dionysius Halicarn. in his observations upon the placing of words, quotes it to this purpose : when Homer, says he, is to introduce a terrible or unusual image, he rejects the more flowing and harmonious vowels, and makes choice of such mutes and consonants as load the syllables, and render the pronunciation difficult.

Pausanias writes in his Attics, that the famous painter Polygnotus painted this subject in the gallery at Athens. Ἐγραψε δὲ καὶ πρὸς τῷ ποταμῷ ταῖς ὁμῶ πλυνέσαις ἱριδόμενον Ὀδυσσεῖα ; he painted Ulysses approaching Nausicaa and her damsels, as they were washing at the river. This is the same Polygnotus who painted in the gallery called ποικίλη, the battle of Marathon gained by Miltiades over the Medes and Persians.

Distant his mournful story to declare,
Or prostrate at her knee address the pray'r.
But fearful to offend, by wisdom sway'd,
At awful distance he accosts the maid.

If from the skies a goddess, or if earth 175
(Imperial virgin) boast thy glorious birth,
To thee I bend; if in that bright disguise
Thou visit earth, a daughter of the skies,

ψ. 175. *If from the skies a goddess, or if earth
(Imperial virgin) boast thy glorious birth,
To thee I bend!*]

There never was a more agreeable and insinuating piece of flattery, than this address of Ulysses; and yet nothing mean appears in it, as is usual in almost all flattery. The only part that seems liable to any imputation, is that exaggeration at the beginning, of calling her a goddess; yet this is proposed with modesty and doubt, and hypothetically. Eustathius assigns two reasons why he resembles her to Diana, rather than to any other deity; either because he found her and her damsels in a solitary place, such as Diana is supposed to frequent with her rural nymphs; or perhaps Ulysses might have seen some statue or picture of that goddess, to which Nausicaa bore a likeness. Virgil, who has imitated this passage, is more bold; when, without any doubt or hesitation, before he knew Venus, he pronounces the person with whom he talks, *O dea, certe*.

Ovid has copied this passage in his *Metamorphosis*, book the fourth.

————— *puer o dignissime credi*
Esse Deus; seu tu Deus es; potes esse Cupido;
Sive es mortalis; qui te genuere beati!
Et frater felix, et quae dedit ubera nutrix!

Hail, Dian, hail! the huntress of the groves
So shines majestic, and so stately moves, 180

*Sed longe cunctis longeque potentior illa
Si qua tibi sponsa est, si quam dignabere taeda!*

Scaliger prefers Virgil's imitation to Homer;

*O, quam te memorem, virgo! namque haud tibi vultus
Mortalis, nec vox hominem sonat. O dea, certe!
An Phoebi soror, an nympharum sanguinis una?*

See his reasons in the fifth book of his Poetics. But Scaliger brings a much heavier charge against Homer, as having stolen the verses from Musaeus, and disgraced them by his alterations. The verses are as follow.

Κύπρι φίλη μετὰ κύπριν, Ἀθηναίη μετ' Ἀθηνῶν,
Οὐ γὰρ ἐπιχθονίῃσιν ἴσθην καλῶ σε γυναιξίν.
Ἀλλὰ σε θυγατέρισσι Διὸς Κρονίωνος ἴσκα,
Ὀλβίος ὃς σ' ἐρύττεισι, καὶ ὀλβίη ἡ τέκε μήτηρ,
Γαστήρ, ἣ σ' ἐλόχυσσι, μακαρτάτη.

Scaliger imagines this Musaeus to be the same mentioned by Virgil in the Elysian fields,

Musaeum ante omnes, etc.

But I believe it is now agreed, that all the works of the antient Musaeus are perished; and that the person who wrote these verses lived many centuries after Homer, and consequently borrowed them from him. Scaliger calls them fine and lively in Musaeus, but abject, unnervate, and unharmonious in Homer. But his prejudice against Homer is too apt to give a wrong bias to his judgment. Is the similitude of sound in *νοῖν ἴσθην* in the second verse of Musaeus, harmonious? and is there not a tautology in the two last lines? *Happy is the mother that bore thee, and most happy the womb that brought thee forth*; as if the happy person in the former line were not the same with the most happy in the lat-

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So breathes an air divine ! But if thy race
 Be mortal, and this earth thy native place,
 Blest is the father from whose loins you sprung,
 Blest is the mother at whose breast you hung,
 Blest are the brethren who thy blood divide, 185
 To such a miracle of charms ally'd :
 Joyful they see applauding princes gaze,
 When stately in the dance you swim th' harmonious maze.
 But blest o'er all, the youth with heav'nly charms,
 Who clasps the bright perfection in his arms ! 190
 Never, I never view'd till this blest hour
 Such finish'd grace ! I gaze and I adore !
 Thus seems the palm with stately honours crown'd
 By Phoebus' altars ; thus o'erlooks the ground ;

ter ! Whereas Homer still rises in his images, and ends with a compliment very agreeable to a beautiful woman.

*But blest o'er all, the youth with heav'nly charms,
 Who clasps the bright perfection in his arms !*

But this is submitted to the reader's better judgment.

ψ. 187. *Joyful they see applauding princes gaze.*] In the original there is a false construction, for after *χρίσσι θυμὸς ἰαίνειται*, Ulysses uses *λευσσόνων*, whereas it ought to be *λευσάσι* ; but this disorder is not without its effect, it represents the modest confusion with which he addresses Nausicaa ; he is struck with a religious awe at the sight of her, (for so *αἶα* properly signifies) and consequently naturally falls into a confusion of expression : this is not a negligence, but a beauty. Eustathius.

ψ. 193. *Thus seems the palm.*] This allusion is introduced to image the stateliness, and exactness of shape

The pride of Delos. (By the Delian coast 195

I voyag'd, leader of a warrior host,

in Nausicaa, to the mind of the reader; and so Tully, as Spondanus observes, understands it. Cicero, 1. De Legibus. *Aut quod Homericus Ulysses Deli se proceram et teneram palmam vidisse dixit, hodie monstrant eandem.* Pliny also mentions this palm. lib. 14. c. 44. *Necnon palma Deli ab ejusdem Dei aetate conspicitur:* this story of the palm is this: 'When Latona was in travail of Apollo in Delos, the earth that instant produced a large palm, against which she rested in her labour.' Homer mentions it in his hymns.

Κεκλιμένη -----

Ἀλχοτάτῳ φοίνικος.

And also Calimachus.

Λύατο δὲ ζωνὴν, ἀπὸ δ' ἐκλίθη ἱμπαλιν ἄμοις
Φοίνικος ποτὶ πρέμνον.

And again,

----- ἐπίνουσιν ὁ Δῆλιος ἄδῃ τὶ φοίνιξ
Ἐξαπίνης.

This allusion is after the oriental manner. Thus in the Psalms, how frequently are persons compared to cedars! and in the same author, children are resembled to olive branches.

This palm was much celebrated by the antients, the superstition of the age had given it a religious veneration, and even in the times of Tully the natives esteemed it immortal; (for so the abovementioned words imply;) this gives weight and beauty to the address of Ulysses; and it could not but be very acceptable to a young lady, to hear herself compared to the greatest wonder in the creation.

Dionysius Halicarnassensis observes the particular beauty of these two verses.

But ah how chang'd ! from thence my sorrow flows ;
 O fatal voyage ; source of all my woes !
 Raptur'd I stood, and as this hour amaz'd,
 With rev'rence at the lofty wonder gaz'd : 200
 Raptur'd I stand ! for earth ne'er knew to bear
 A plant so stately, or a nymph so fair.
 Aw'd from access, I lift my suppliant hands ;
 For misery, oh queen, before thee stands !

Δήλω δὴ ποτε τοῖον Ἀπόλλωνος παρὰ βοῶν,
 Φοινίκας νῆον ἔρνος ἀνερχόμενον ἐνόησα.

When Homer, says he, would paint an elegance of beauty, or represent any agreeable object, he makes use of the smoothest vowels and most flowing semivowels, as in the lines last recited : he rejects harsh sounds, and a collision of rough words ; but the lines flow along with a smooth harmony of letters and syllables, without any offence to the ear by asperity of sound.

ψ. 198. *O fatal voyage, source of all my woes.*] There is some obscurity in this passage : Ulysses speaks in general, and does not specify what voyage he means. It may therefore be asked how is it to be understood ? Eustathius answers, that the voyage of the Greeks to the Trojan expedition is intended by the poet ; for Lycophron writes, that the Greeks sailed by Delos in their passage to Troy.

Homer passes over the voyage in this transient manner without a further explanation : Ulysses had no leisure to enlarge upon that story, but reserves it more advantageously for a future discovery before Alcinous and the Phaeacian rulers. By this conduct he avoids a repetition, which must have been tedious to the reader, who would have found little appetite afterwards, if he had already been satisfied by a full discovery made to Nausicaa. The obscurity therefore arises from choice, not want of judgment.

Twice ten tempestuous nights I toll'd, resign'd 205

To roring billows, and the warring wind ;

Heav'n bade the deep to spare ! but heav'n my foe
Spare only to inflict some mightier woe ?

Inur'd to cares, to death in all its forms,

Outcast I rove, familiär with the storms ! 210

Once more I view the face of human kind :

Oh let soft pity touch thy gen'rous mind !

Unconscious of what air I breathe, I stand

Naked, defenceless on a foreign land.

Propitious to my wants, a vest supply 215

To guard the wretch from th' inclement sky :

So may the gods who heav'n and earth controul,

Crown the chaste wishes of thy virtuous soul,

On thy soft hours their choicest blessings shed,

Blest with a husband be thy bridal bed, 220

Blest be thy husband with a blooming race,

And lasting union crown your blisful days.

The gods, when they supremely bless, bestow

Firm union on their favourites below ;

Then envy grieves, with inly-pining hate ; 225

The good exult, and heav'n is in our state.

To whom the nymph : O stranger, cease thy care.

Wise is thy soul, but man is born to bear :

Jove weighs affairs of earth in dubious scales,

And the good suffers, while the bad prevails : 230

*v. 229. Jove weighs affairs of earth in dubious scales,
And the good suffers, while the bad prevails.]*

The morality of this passage is excellent, and very well

Bear, with a soul resign'd, the will of Jove ;
 Who breathes, must mourn : thy woes are from above.
 But since thou tread'st our hospitable shore,
 'Tis mine to bid the wretched grieve no more,
 To clothe the naked, and thy way to guide — 235
 Know, the Phaeacian tribes this land divide ;

adapted to the present occasion. Ulysses had said,

*Heav'n bade the deep to spare ! but heav'n my foe
 Spares only to insist some mightier war.*

Nausicaa makes use of this expression to pay her address to Ulysses, and at the same time teaches, conformably to truth, that the afflicted are not always the objects of divine hate: the gods, adds she, bestow good and evil indifferently, and therefore we must not judge of men from their conditions, for good men are frequently wretched, and bad men happy. Nay, sometimes affliction distinguishes a man of goodness, when he bears it with a greatness of spirit. Sophocles puts a very beautiful expression into the mouth of Oedipus, καλλος κακῶν, the beauty and ornament of calamities. Eustathius.

Longinus is of opinion, that when great poets and writers sink in their vigour, and cannot reach the pathetic, they descend to the moral. Hence he judges the Odyssey to be the work of Homer's declining years, and gives that as a reason of its morality: he speaks not this out of derogation to Homer, for he compares him to the sun, which, though it has not the same warmth as when in the meridian, is always of the same bigness: this is no dishonour to the Odyssey; the most useful, if not the most beautiful circumstance is allowed it, I mean instruction: In the Odyssey Homer appears to be the better man, in the Iliad the better poet.

From great Alcinous' royal loins I spring,
A happy nation, and an happy king.

Then to her maids—Why, why, ye coward train
These fears, this flight? ye fear, and fly in vain. 240
Dread ye a foe? dismiss that idle dread,
'Tis death with hostile step these shores to tread;
Safe in the love of heav'n, an ocean flows
Around our realm, a barrier from the foes;
'Tis ours this son of sorrow to relieve, 245
Chear the sad heart, nor let affliction grieve.
By Jove the stranger and the poor are sent,
And what to those we give, to Jove is lent.

ψ. 242. *'Tis death with hostile step these shores to tread.*]
This I take to be the meaning of the word *δυσπός*, which
Eustathius explains by *ζῶν καὶ ἰσχυρὸς*, *vivus et valens*;
or, *he shall not be long-lived*. But it may be asked, how
this character of valour in destroying their enemies,
can agree with the Phaeacians, an effeminate, unwar-
like nation? Eustathius answers, that the protection
of the gods is the best defence, and upon this Nausicaa
replies. But then it is necessary that man should co-
operate with the gods; for it is in vain to rely upon
the gods for safety, if we ourselves make not use of
means proper for it: whereas the Phaeacians were a
people wholly given up to luxury and pleasures. The
true reason then of Nausicaa's praise of the Phaeaci-
ans may perhaps be drawn from that honourable par-
tiality, and innate love which every person feels for
his country. She knew no people greater than the
Phaeacians, and having ever lived in full security from
enemies, she concludes, that it is not in the power of
enemies to disturb that security.

ψ. 247. *By Jove the stranger and the poor are sent,
And what to those we give, to Jove is lent.*]

Then food supply, and bathe his fainting limbs
Where waving shades obscure the mazy streams. 250

Obedient to the call, the chief they guide
To the calm current of the secret tide ;
Close by the stream a royal dress they lay,
A vest and robe, with rich embroid'ry gay :
Then unguents in a vase of gold supply, 255
That breath'd a fragrance through the balmy sky.

To them the king. No longer I detain
Your friendly care : retire, ye virgin train !
Retire, while from my weary'd limbs I laye
The soul pollution of the briny wave : 260
Ye gods ! since this worn frame refection knew,
What scenes have I survey'd of dreadful view ?
But, nymphs, recede ! sage chastity denies
To raise the blush, or pain the modest eyes.

This is a very remarkable passage, full of such a pious generosity as the wisest teach, and the best practise. I am sensible it may be understood two ways ; and in both, it bears an excellent instruction. The words are, *the poor and stranger are from Jove, and a small gift is acceptable to them, or acceptable to Jupiter, Διὶ φίλον*. I have chosen the latter, in conformity to the eastern way of thinking : *He that hath pity on the poor lendeth unto the Lord*, as it is expressed in the Proverbs.

ψ. 263. *But, nymphs, recede ! etc.*] This place seems contradictory to the practice of antiquity, and other passages in the Odyssey : nothing is more frequent than for heroes to make use of the ministry of damsels in bathing, as appears from Polycaste and Telemachus, etc. Whence is it then that Ulysses commands the attendants of Nausicaa to withdraw while he bathes ?

The nymphs withdrawn, at once into the tide 265
 Active he bounds; the flashing waves divide:
 O'er all his limbs his hands the wave diffuse,
 And from his locks compress the weedy ooze;
 The balmy oil, a fragrant show'r, he sheds,
 Then drest in pomp magnificently treads. 270

Spondanus is of opinion, that the poet intended to condemn an indecent custom of those ages solemnly by the mouth of so wise a person as Ulysses: but there is no other instance in all his works to confirm that conjecture. I am at a loss to give a better reason, unless the difference of the places might make an alteration in the action. It is possible that in baths prepared for public use, there might be some convenience to defend the person who bathed in some degree from observation, which might be wanting in an open river, so that the action might be more indecent in the one instance than in the other, and consequently occasion these words of Ulysses: but this is a conjecture, and submitted as such to the reader's better judgment.

χ. 265.

— At once into the tide
 Active he bounds.]

It may be asked why Ulysses prefers the river-waters in washing, to the waters of the sea, in the *Odyssey*; whereas in the tenth book of the *Iliad*, after the death of Dolon, Diomed and Ulysses prefer the sea-waters to those of the river? There is a different reason for this different regimen: in the *Iliad*, Ulysses was fatigued, and sweated with the labours of the night, and in such a case the sea-waters, being more rough, are more purifying and corroborating: but here Ulysses comes from the seas, and (as Plutarch in his *Symposiacs* observes upon this passage,) the more subtle and light particles exhale by the heat of the sun, but the rough and the saline stick to the body, till washed away by fresh waters.

The warrior goddess gives his frame to shine
With majesty enlarg'd, and air divine;

ψ. 271. *The warrior goddess gives his frame to shine.*] Poetry delights in the marvellous, and ennobles the most ordinary subjects by dressing them with poetical ornaments, and giving them an adventitious dignity. The foundation of this fiction, of Ulysses receiving beauty from Pallas, is only this: the shipwreck and sufferings of Ulysses had changed his face and features, and his long fasting given him a pale and sorrowful aspect; but being bathed, perfumed, and dressed in robes, he appears another man, full of life and beauty. This sudden change gave Homer the hint to improve it into a miracle; and he ascribes it to Minerva, to give a dignity to his poetry. He further embellishes the description by a very happy comparison. Virgil has imitated it.

*Os humerosque Deo similis; namque ipsa decoram
Caesariem nato genetrix, lumenque juventae
Purpureum, et laetos oculis afflarat honores.
Quale manus addunt ebori decus, aut ubi flavo
Argentum Pariusve lapis circumdatur auro.*

Scaliger, in the fifth book of his Poetics, prefers Virgil before Homer; and perhaps his opinion is just: *manus*, he says, is more elegant than *vir*; and *addunt ebori decus*, than *χαρίεντα δὲ ἱππὰ τελέει*. *Os humerosque Deo similis*, carries a nobler idea than Homer's *μυῖνονα καὶ τὰ στήθεα*; and above all,

———— *Lumenque juventae
Purpureum, et laetos oculis afflarat honores.*

is inexpressibly beautiful.

It is said that this image is made by the assistance of Vulcan and Minerva: why by two deities? Eustathius answers, the first rudiments and formation of it in the fire is proper to Vulcan, and Minerva is the president

Back from his brows a length of hair unfurls,
 His hyacinthine locks descend in wavy curls.
 As by some artist to whom Vulcan gives 275
 His skill divine, a breathing statue lives ;
 By Pallas taught, he frames the wond'rous mold,
 And o'er the silver pours the fusile gold.
 So Pallas his heroic frame improves
 With heavenly bloom, and like a God he moves. 280
 A fragrance breathes around : majestic grace
 Attends his steps : th' astonish'd virgins gaze,
 Soft he reclines along the murm'ring seas,
 Inhaling freshness from the fanning breeze.

The wond'ring nymph his glorious port survey'd,
 And to her damsels, with amazement, said. 286

Not without care divine the stranger treads
 This land of joy : his steps some godhead leads :
 Would Jove destroy him, sure he had been driv'n
 Far from this realm, the fav'rite isle of heav'n. 290
 Late a sad spectacle of woe, he trod
 The desert sands, and now he looks a god.

of arts ; Minerva gives the artificer wisdom in design-
 ing, and Vulcan skill in labouring and finishing the work.

ψ. 283. *He reclines along the murm'ring seas.*] This little circumstance, Eustathius observes, is not without its effect ; the poet withdraws Ulysses, to give Nausicaa an opportunity to speak freely in his praise without a breach of modesty : she speaks apart to her damsels, and, by this conduct, Ulysses neither hears his own commendation. which is a pain to all worthy spirits, nor does Nausicaa betray an indecent sensibility, because she speaks only to her own sex and attendants.

Oh heav'n ! in my connubial hour decree
 This man my spouse, or such a spouse as he !
 But haste, the viands, and the bowl provide---- 295
 The maids the viand, and the bowl supply'd :
 Eager he fed, for keen his hunger rag'd,
 And with the gen'rous vintage thirst asswag'd.

Now on return her care Nausicaa bends,
 The robes resumes, the glittering car ascends, 300

Y. 293. *Oh heav'n ! in my connubial hour decree*

This man my spouse, or such a spouse as he !

This passage has been censured as an outrage against modesty and credibility : is it probable that a young princess should fall in love with a stranger at the first sight ? and if she really falls in love, is it not an indecent passion ? I will lay before the reader the observations of Plutarch upon it. ' If Nausicaa, upon casting her eyes upon this stranger, and feeling such a passion for him as Calypso felt, talks thus out of wantonness, her conduct is blameable : but if perceiving his wisdom by his prudent address, she wishes for such an husband, rather than a person of her own country, who had no better qualifications than singing, dancing, and dressing, she is to be commended.' This discovers no weakness, but prudence, and a true judgment. She deserves to be imitated by the fair sex, who ought to prefer a good understanding, before a fine coat, and a man of worth, before a good dancer.

Besides, it may be offered in vindication of Nausicaa, that she had in the morning been assured by a vision from heaven, that her nuptials were at hand ; this might induce her to believe that Ulysses was the person intended by the vision for her husband : and his good sense and prudent behaviour, as Dacier observes, might make her wish it, without any imputation of immodesty.

Far blooming o'er the field: and as she press'd
The splendid seat, the list'ning chief address'd.

Stranger, arise! the sun rolls down the day,
Lo, to the palace I direct thy way:
Where in high state the nobles of the land 305
Attend my royal Sire, a radiant band.

But hear, though wisdom in thy soul presides,
Speaks from thy tongue, and ev'ry action guides:
Advance at distance, while I pass the plain
Where o'er the furrows waves the golden grain: 310

Alone I re-ascend — With airy mounds
A strength of wall the guarded city bounds:
The jutting land two ample bays divides:
Full through the narrow mouths descend the tides:
The spacious basins arching rocks enclose, 315
A sure defence from every storm that blows.

Close to the bay great Neptune's fane adjoins;
And near, a forum flank'd with marble shines,
Where the bold youth, the num'rous fleets to store,
Shape the broad sail, or smoothe the taper oar; 320

χ. 313. *The jutting land two ample bays divides,*

Full thro' the narrow mouths descend the tides.]

This passage is not without its difficulty: but the scholiast upon Dionysius Periegetes gives us a full explication of it. *Δὺς λιμένας ἔχει ἡ φαίακίς, τὸν μὲν Ἀλκινόου, τὸν δὲ Τάλλῳ, διὸ φησὶ Καλλίμαχος ἀμφιδυμὸς φαίαξ.* The island of Phaeacia has two ports, the one called the port of Alcinous, the other of Hyllus; thus Callimachus calls it the place of two ports. And Apollonius, for the same reason, calls it *ἀμφικαρὴς*, or the place which is entered by two ports.

Dacier.

For not the bow they bend, nor boast the skill
 To give the feather'd arrow wings to kill,
 But the tall-mast above the vessel rear,
 Or teach the fluttering sail to float in air;
 They rush into the deep with eager joy, 325
 Climb the steep surge, and through the tempest fly;

ψ. 325. *They rush into the deep with eager joy.*] It is very judicious in the poet to let us thus fully into the character of the Phæacians; before he comes to show what relation they have to the story of the Odyssey: he describes Alcinous and the people of better rank, as persons of great hospitality and humanity; this gives an air of probability to the free and benevolent reception which Ulysses found: he describes the vulgar as excellent navigators; and he does this not only because they are islanders; but, as Eustathius observes, to prepare the way for the return of Ulysses, who was to be restored by their conduct to his country, even against the inclination of Neptune, the God of the ocean. But it may be asked, is not Homer inconsistent with himself, when he paints the Phæacians as men of the utmost humanity, and immediately after calls them a proud unpolished race; and given up to censoriousness? It is easy to reconcile the seeming contradiction, by applying the character of humanity to the higher rank of the nation, and the other to the vulgar and the mariners. I believe the same character holds good to this day amongst any people who are much addicted to sea-affairs; they contract a roughness, by being secluded from the more general converse of mankind, and consequently are strangers to that affability, which is the effect of a more enlarged conversation. But what is it that inclines the Phæacians to be censorious? It is to be remembered, that they are every where described as a people abandoned to idleness; to idleness, therefore, that part of their character is to be imputed. When the thoughts are not

A proud, unpolish'd race — To me belongs
 The care to shun the blast of slanderous tongues;
 Lest malice, prone the virtuous to defame,
 Thus with vile censure taint my spotless name. 330

‘ What stranger this, whom thus Nausicaa leads?
 ‘ Heav’ns ! with what graceful majesty he treads !
 ‘ Perhaps a native of some distant shore,
 ‘ The future consort of her bridal hour ;
 ‘ Or rather, some descendant of the skies ; 335
 ‘ Won by her pray’r, th’ aerial bridegroom flies.

employed upon things, it is usual to turn them upon persons: a good man has not the inclination, an industrious man not the leisure, to be censorious, so that censure is the property of idleness. This I take to be the moral, intended to be drawn from the character of the Phaeacians.

ψ. 331. *What stranger this, whom thus Nausicaa leads?*] This is an instance of the great art of Homer, in saying every thing properly. Nausicaa had conceived a great esteem for Ulysses, and she had an inclination to let him know it; but modesty forbade her to reveal it openly: how then shall Ulysses know the value she has for his person, consistently with the modesty of Nausicaa? Homer, with great address, puts her compliments into the mouth of the Phaeacians, and by this method she speaks her own sentiments, as the sentiments of the Phaeacians: Nausicaa, as it were, is withdrawn, and a whole nation introduced for a more general praise of Ulysses.

ψ. 335. *Or rather some descendant of the skies.*] Eustathius remarks, that the compliments of Nausicaa answer the compliments made to her by Ulysses: he resembled her to Diana, she him to the gods. But it may be asked, are not both these extravagancies? and is it not beyond all credibility that Nausicaa should be thought a goddess, or Ulysses a god? In these ages it would be judged extravagant, but it is to be remembered that in the days of

' Heav'n on that hour its choicest influence shed,
 ' That gave a foreign spouse to crown her bed!
 ' All, all the god-like worthies that adorn
 ' This realm, she flies : Phaeacia is her scorn.' 340
 And just the blame: for female innocence
 Not only flies the guilt, but shuns th' offence:
 Th' unguarded virgin as unchaste I blame,
 And the least freedom with the sex is shame,
 'Till our consenting fires a spouse provide, 345
 And public nuptials justify the bride.

Homer every grove, river, fountain, and oak-tree, were thought to have their peculiar deities; this makes such relations as these more reconcilable, if not to truth, at least to the opinions of antiquity, which is sufficient for poetry.

ψ. 344. — *The least freedom with the sex is shame,*
'Till our consenting fires a spouse provide.]

This is an admirable picture of antient female life among the orientals; the virgins were very retired, and never appeared amongst men but upon extraordinary occasions, and then always in the presence of the father or mother: but when they were married, says Eustathius, they had more liberty. Thus Helen converses freely with Telemachus and Pisistratus, and Penelope sometimes with the suitors. Nausicaa delivers her judgment sententiously, to give it more weight; what can be more modest than these expressions? and yet they have been greatly traduced by Mon. Perrault, a French critic; he translates the passage so as to imply, that 'Nausicaa disapproves of a virgin's lying with a man without the permission of her father, before marriage;' ἀνδράσι μιγνισθαι, led him into this mistake, which is sometimes used in such a signification, but here it only means *conversation*: if the word μιγνισθαι signified more than keeping company, it would be more ridiculous, as Boileau observes upon Longinus, than Perrault makes it: for it is joined to ἀνδράσι, and then it would infer that Nausicaa disapproves of a young woman's

But would'st thou soon review thy native plain :
 Attend, and speedy thou shalt pass the main :
 Nigh where a grove, with verdant poplars crown'd,
 To Pallas sacred, shades the holy ground, 350
 We bend our way : a bubbling fount distills
 A lucid lake, and thence descends in rills ;
 Around the grove a mead with lively green
 Falls by degrees, and forms a beauteous scene ;

lying with *several men* before she was married, without the licence of her father. The passage, continues Boileau, is full of honour and decency : Nausicaa has a design to introduce Ulysses to her father, she tells him she goes before to prepare the way for his reception, but that she must not be seen to enter the city in his company, for fear of giving offence, which a modest woman ought not to give : a virtuous woman is obliged not only to avoid immodesty, but the appearance of it ; and for her part she could not approve of a young woman keeping company with men without the permission of her father or mother, before she was married. Thus the indecency is not in Homer, but the critic : it is indeed in Homer an excellent lecture of modesty and morality.

¶ 347. *But would'st thou soon review thy native plain ?* Eustathius and Dacier are both of opinion, that Nausicaa had conceived a passion for Ulysses : I think this passage is an evidence that she rather admired and esteemed, than loved him ; for it is contrary to the nature of the passion to give directions for the departure of the person beloved, but rather to invent excuses to prolong his stay. It is true, Nausicaa had wished, in the foregoing parts of this book, that she might have Ulysses for her husband, or such an husband as Ulysses : but this only shews, that she admired his accomplishments, nor could she have added *such a spouse as he*, at all, if her affections had been engaged and fixed upon Ulysses only. This likewise takes off the objection of a too great fondness in Nausicaa ; for it might have appeared too great a fondness to have fallen in love at the first with an absolute stranger.

Book VI. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 327

Here a rich juice the royal vineyard pours; 355

And there the garden yields a waste of flow'rs.

Hence lies the town as far, as to the ear

Floats a strong shout along the waves of air.

There wait embowr'd, while I ascend alone

To great Alcinous on his royal throne. 360

Arriv'd, advance impatient of delay,

And to the lofty palace bend thy way :

The lofty palace overlooks the town,

From ev'ry dome by pomp superior known ;

A child may point the way. With earnest gait 365

Seek thou the queen along the rooms of state;

Her royal hand a wond'rous work designs,

Around, a circle of bright damsels shines,

Part twist the threads, and part the wool dispose,

While with the purple orb the spindle glows. 370

High on a throne, amid the Scherian pow'rs,

My royal father shares the genial hours ;

But to the queen thy mournful tale disclose ;

With the prevailing eloquence of woes :

So shalt thou view with joy thy natal shore, 375

Though mountains rise between, and oceans roar.

She added not, but waving as she wheel'd

The silver scourge, it glitter'd o'er the field :

With skill the virgin guides th' embroider'd rein,

Slow rows the car before th' attending train. 380

ψ. 373. *But to the queen thy mournful tale disclose.*]

This little circumstance, seemingly of small importance, is not without its beauty. It is natural for a daughter to apply to the mother, rather than the father: women are likewise generally of a compassionate nature, and therefore the poet first interests the queen in the cause of Ulysses. At the same time he gives a pattern of conjugal affection, in the union between Arete and Alcinous.

Now whirling down the heav'ns, the golden day
 Shot through the western clouds a dewy ray ;
 The grove they reach, where from the sacred shade
 To Pallas thus the pensive hero pray'd.

Daughter of Jove ! whose arms in thunder wield
 Th' avenging bolt, and shake the dreadful shield ; 386
 Forsook by thee, in vain I sought thy aid,
 When booming billows clos'd above my head :
 Attend, unconquer'd maid ! accord my vows,
 Bid the great hear, and pitying heal my woes. 390

This heard Minerva, but forbore to fly
 (By Neptune aw'd) apparent from the sky :
 Stern god ! who rag'd with vengeance unrestrain'd,
 Till great Ulysses hail'd his native land.

v. 391.

—— But forbore to fly

(By Neptune aw'd) apparent from the sky.]

We see the antients held a subordination amongst the deities, and though different in inclinations, yet they act in harmony : one god resists not another deity. This is more fully explained, as Eustathius observes, by Euripides, in his *Hippolytus* ; where Diana says, it is not the custom of the gods to resist one the other, when they take vengeance even upon the favourites of other deities. The late tempest that Neptune had raised for the destruction of Ulysses, was an instance of Neptune's implacable anger : this makes Minerva take such measures as to avoid an open opposition, and yet consult the safety of Ulysses : she descends, but it is secretly.

This book takes up part of the night, and the whole thirty-second day ; the vision of Nausicaa is related in the preceding night, and Ulysses enters the city a little after the sun sets in the following evening. So that thirty-two days are completed since the opening of the poem.

This book in general is full of life and variety : it is true, the subject of it is simple and unadorned, but improved by the poet, and rendered entertaining and noble. The muse of Homer is like his Minerva, who respects Ulysses, who from an object of commiseration assumes his majesty, and gives a grace to every feature.

The End of the First Volume.



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